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# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE

VOL. LXV





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# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE

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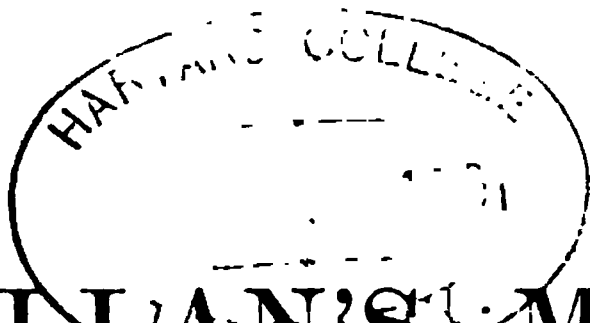
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# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

NOVEMBER, 1891.

## A FIRST FAMILY OF TASAJARA.

BY BRET HARTE.

### CHAPTER IX.

THE wayfarers on the Tasajara turnpike, whom Mr. Daniel Harcourt passed with his fast trotting mare and sulky, saw that their great fellow townsman was more than usually preoccupied and curt in his acknowledgment of their salutations. Nevertheless as he drew near the creek, he partly checked his horse, and when he reached a slight acclivity of the interminable plain—which had really been the bank of the creek in bygone days—he pulled up, alighted, tied his horse to a rail fence, and clambering over the enclosure made his way along the ridge. It was covered with nettles, thistles, and a few wiry dwarf larches of native growth; dust from the adjacent highway had invaded it with a few scattered and torn handbills, waste paper, rags, empty provision cans, and other suburban *débris*. Yet it was the site of Lige Curtis's cabin, long since erased and forgotten. The bed of the old creek had receded; the last *tules* had been cleared away; the channel and *embarcadero* were half a mile from the bank and log whereon the pioneer of Tasajara had idly sunned himself.

Mr. Harcourt walked on, occasionally turning over the scattered objects with his foot, and stopping at times to examine the ground more closely. It had not apparently been disturbed since he himself, six years

ago, had razed the wretched shanty and carried off its timbers to aid in the erection of a larger cabin further inland. He raised his eyes to the prospect before him—to the town with its steamboats lying at the wharves, to the grain elevator the warehouses, the railroad station with its puffing engines, the flagstaff of Harcourt House and the clustering roofs of the town, and beyond the painted dome of his last creation, the Free Library. This was all *his* work, *his* planning, *his* foresight, whatever they might say of the wandering drunkard from whose tremulous fingers he had snatched the opportunity. They could not take *that* from him, however they might follow him with envy and reviling, any more than they could wrest from him the five years of peaceful possession. It was with something of the prosperous consciousness with which he had mounted the platform on the opening of the Free Library, that he now climbed into his buggy and drove away.

Nevertheless he stopped at his Land Office as he drove into town, and gave a few orders. "I want a strong picket fence put around the fifty *vara* lot in block fifty-seven, and the ground cleared up at once. Let me know when the men get to work, and I'll overlook them."

Re-entering his own house in the square where Mrs. Harcourt and Clementina—who often accompanied

him in those business visits—were waiting for him with luncheon, he smiled somewhat superciliously as the servant informed him that “Professor Grant had just arrived.” Really that man was trying to make the most of his time with Clementina! Perhaps the rival attractions of that Boston swell Shipley had something to do with it! He must positively talk to Clementina about this. In point of fact he himself was a little disappointed in Grant, who, since his offer to take the task of hunting down his calumniators, had really done nothing. He turned into his study, but was slightly astonished to find that Grant, instead of paying court to Clementina in the adjoining drawing-room, was sitting rather thoughtfully in his own arm-chair.

He rose as Harcourt entered. “I didn’t let them announce me to the ladies,” he said, “as I have some important business with you first, and we may find it necessary that I should take the next train back to town. You remember that a few weeks ago I offered to look into the matter of those slanders against you. I apprehended it would be a trifling matter of envy or jealousy on the part of your old associates or neighbours which could be put straight with a little good feeling, but I must be frank with you, Harcourt, and say at the beginning that it turns out to be an infernally ugly business. Call it conspiracy if you like, or organised hostility, I’m afraid it will require a lawyer rather than an arbitrator to manage it, and the sooner the better. For the most unpleasant thing about it is, that I can’t find out exactly *how bad* it is!”

Unfortunately the weaker instinct of Harcourt’s nature was first roused; the vulgar rage which confounds the bearer of ill news with the news itself filled his breast. “And this is all that your confounded intermeddling came to?” he said brutally.

“No,” said Grant quietly with a preoccupied ignoring of the insult that

was more hopeless for Harcourt. “I found out that; it is claimed that this Lige Curtis was not drowned nor lost that night; but that he escaped, and for three years has convinced another man that you are wrongfully in possession of this land; that these two naturally hold you in their power, and that they are only waiting for you to be forced into legal proceedings for slander to prove all their charges. Until then, for some reason best known to themselves, Curtis remains in the background.”

“Does he deny the deed under which I hold the property?” said Harcourt savagely.

“He says it was only a security for a trifling loan, and not an actual transfer.”

“And don’t those fools know that his security could be forfeited?”

“Yes, but not in the way it is recorded in the County Clerk’s Office. They say that the record shows that there was an interpolation in the paper he left with you—which was a forgery. Briefly, Harcourt, you are accused of that. More—it is intimated that when he fell into the creek that night, and escaped on a raft that was floating past, that he had been first stunned by a blow from some one interested in getting rid of him.”

He paused and glanced out of the window.

“Is that all?” asked Harcourt in a perfectly quiet, steady voice.

“All,” replied Grant, struck with the change in his companion’s manner and turning his eyes upon him quickly.

The change indeed was marked and significant. Whether from relief at knowing the worst, or whether he was experiencing the same reaction from the utter falsity of this last accusation that he had felt when Grant had unintentionally wronged him in his previous recollection, certain it is that some unknown reserve of strength in his own nature, of which he knew nothing before, suddenly came to his aid in this extremity. It invested

him with an uncouth dignity that for the first time excited Grant's respect.

"I beg your pardon, Grant, for the hasty way I spoke to you a moment ago, for I thank you, and appreciate thoroughly and sincerely what you have done. You are right; it is a matter for fighting, and not fussing over. But I must have a head to hit. Whose is it?"

"The man who holds himself legally responsible is Fletcher—the proprietor of the *Clarion*, and a man of property."

"The *Clarion*? That is the paper which began the attack?" said Harcourt.

"Yes, and it is only fair to tell you here that your son threw up his place on it in consequence of its attack upon you."

There was perhaps the slightest possible shrinking in Harcourt's eyelids—the one congenital likeness to his discarded son—but his otherwise calm demeanour did not change. Grant went on more cheerfully: "I've told you all I know. When I spoke of an unknown *worst*, I did not refer to any further accusation but to whatever evidence they might have fabricated or suborned to prove any one of them. It is only the strength and fairness of the hands they hold that is uncertain. Against that you have your certain uncontested possession, the peculiar character and antecedents of this Lige Curtis which would make his evidence untrustworthy and even make it difficult for them to establish his identity. I am told that his failure to contest your appropriation of his property is explained by the fact of his being absent from the country most of the time; but again this would not account for their silence until within the last six months, unless they have been waiting for further evidence to establish it. But even then they must have known that the time of recovery had passed. You are a practical man, Harcourt, I needn't tell you therefore what your lawyer will probably tell you, that practically,

so far as your rights are concerned, you remain as before these calumnies; that a cause of action unprosecuted or in abeyance is practically no cause, and that it is not for you to anticipate one. *But——*"

He paused and looked steadily at Harcourt. Harcourt met his look with a dull, ox-like stolidity. "I shall begin the suit at once," he said.

"And I," said Grant, holding out his hand, "will stand by you. But tell me now what you knew of this man Curtis—his character and disposition; it may be some clue as to what are his methods and his intentions."

Harcourt briefly sketched Lige Curtis as he knew him and understood him. It was another indication of his reserved power that the description was so singularly clear, practical, unprejudiced, and impartial that it impressed Grant with its truthfulness.

"I can't make him out," he said; "you have drawn a weak, but neither a dishonest nor malignant man. There must have been somebody behind him. Can you think of any personal enemy?"

"I have been subjected to the usual jealousy and envy of my old neighbours, I suppose, but nothing more. I have harmed no one knowingly."

Grant was silent; it had flashed across him that Rice might have harboured revenge for his father-in-law's interference in his brief matrimonial experience. He had also suddenly recalled his conversation with Billings on the day that he first arrived at Tasajara. It would not be strange if this man had some intimation of the secret. He would try to find him that evening. He rose.

"You will stay to dinner? My wife and Clementina will expect you."

"Not to-night; I am dining at the hotel," said Grant smilingly; "but I will come in later in the evening if I may." He paused hesitatingly for a moment. "Have your wife and daughter ever expressed any opinion on this matter?"

"No," said Harcourt. "Mrs. Harcourt knows nothing of anything that does not happen *in* the house; Euphemia knows only the things that happen out of it where she is visiting—and I suppose that young men prefer to talk to her about other things than the slanders of her father. And Clementina—well, you know how calm and superior to these things *she* is."

"For that very reason I thought that perhaps she might be able to see them more clearly—but no matter! I dare say you are quite right in not discussing them at home." This was the fact, although Grant had not forgotten that Harcourt had put forward his daughters as a reason for stopping the scandal some weeks before—a reason which however seemed never to have been borne out by any apparent sensitiveness of the girls themselves.

When Grant had left, Harcourt remained for some moments steadfastly gazing from the window over the Tasajara plain. He had not lost his look of concentrated power, nor his determination to fight. A struggle between himself and the phantoms of the past had become now a necessary stimulus for its own sake—for the sake of his mental and physical equipoise. He saw before him the pale, agitated, irresolute features of Lige Curtis—not the man *he* had injured, but the man who had injured *him*, whose spirit was aimlessly and wantonly—for he had never attempted to get back his possessions in his lifetime, nor ever tried to communicate with the possessor—striking at him in the shadow. And it was *that* man, that pale, writhing, frightened wretch whom he had once mercifully helped! Yes, whose *life* he had even saved that night from exposure and *delirium tremens* when he had given him the whisky. And this life he had saved, only to have it set in motion a conspiracy to ruin him! Who knows that Lige had not purposely conceived what they had believed to

be an attempt at suicide, only to cast suspicion of murder on *him*! From which it will be perceived that Harcourt's powers of moral reasoning had not improved in five years, and that even the impartiality he had just shown in his description of Lige to Grant had been swallowed up in this new sense of injury. The founder of Tasajara, whose cool business logic, unfailing foresight, and practical deductions, were never at fault, was once more childishly adrift in his moral ethics.

And there was Clementina, of whose judgment Grant had spoken so persistently,—could she assist him? It was true, as he had said, he had never talked to her of his affairs. In his sometimes uneasy consciousness of her superiority he had shrunk from even revealing his anxieties, much less his actual secret, and from anything that might prejudice the lofty paternal attitude he had taken towards his daughters from the beginning of his good fortune. He was never quite sure if her acceptance of it was real; he was never entirely free from a certain jealousy that always mingled with his pride in her superior rectitude; and yet his feeling was distinct from the good-natured contempt he had for his wife's loyalty, the anger and suspicion that his son's opposition had provoked, and the half affectionate toleration he had felt for Euphemia's waywardness. However he would sound Clementina without betraying himself.

He was anticipated by a slight step in the passage and the pushing open of his study door. The tall, graceful figure of the girl herself stood in the opening.

"They tell me Mr. Grant has been here. Does he stay to dinner?"

"No, he has an engagement at the hotel, but he will probably drop in later. Come in, Clemmy I want to talk to you. Shut the door and sit down."

She slipped in quietly, shut the door, took a seat on the sofa, softly smoothed

down her gown, and turned her graceful head and serenely composed face towards him. Sitting thus she looked like some finely finished painting that decorated rather than belonged to the room—not only distinctly alien to the flesh and blood relative before her, but to the house, and even the local, monotonous landscape beyond the window with the shining new shingles and chimneys that cut the new blue sky. These singular perfections seemed to increase in Harcourt's mind the exasperating sense of injury inflicted upon him by Lige's exposures. With a daughter so incomparably gifted—a matchless creation that was enough in herself to ennoble that fortune which his own skill and genius had lifted from the muddy *tules* of Tasajara where this Lige had left it—that *she* should be subjected to this annoyance seemed an infamy that Providence could not allow! What was his mere venial transgression to this exaggerated retribution?

“Clemmy, girl, I'm going to ask you a question. Listen, Pet.” He had begun with a reminiscent tenderness of the epoch of her childhood, but meeting the unresponding maturity of her clear eyes he abandoned it. “You know, Clementina, I have never interfered in your affairs, nor tried to influence your friendships for anybody. Whatever people may have to say of me they can't say that! I've always trusted you, as I would myself, to choose your own associates; I have never regretted it, and I don't regret it now. But I'd like to know—I have reasons to-day for asking—how matters stand between you and Grant.”

The Parian head of Minerva on the book-case above her did not offer the spectator a face less free from maidenly confusion than Clementina's at that moment. Her father had certainly expected none, but he was not prepared for the perfect coolness of her reply.

“Do you mean have I *accepted* him?”

“No—well—yes.”

“No, then! Is that what he wished to see you about? It was understood that he was not to allude again to the subject to any one.”

“He has not to *me*. It was only my own idea. He had something very different to tell me. You may not know, Clementina” he begun cautiously, “that I have been lately the subject of some anonymous slanders, and Grant has taken the trouble to track them down for me. It is a calumny that goes back as far as Sidon, and I may want your level head and good memory to help me to refute it.” He then repeated calmly and clearly, with no trace of the fury that had raged within him a moment before, the substance of Grant's revelation.

The young girl listened without apparent emotion. When he had finished she said quickly: “And what do you want me to recollect?”

The hardest part of Harcourt's task was coming. “Well, don't you remember that I told you the day the surveyors went away—that—I had bought this land of Lige Curtis some time before?”

“Yes, I remember your saying so, but——”

“But what?”

“I thought you only meant that to satisfy mother.”

Daniel Harcourt felt the blood settling round his heart, but he was constrained by an irresistible impulse to know the worst. “Well, what did *you* think it really was?”

“I only thought that Lige Curtis had simply let you have it, that's all.”

Harcourt breathed again. “But what for? Why should he?”

“Well—on *my* account.”

“On *your* account! What in Heaven's name had *you* to do with it?”

“He loved me.” There was not the slightest trace of vanity, self-consciousness or coquetry in her quiet fateful face, and for this very reason Harcourt knew that she was speaking the truth.



"Loved *you*!—you, Clementina!—my daughter! Did he ever *tell* you so?"

"Not in words. He used to walk up and down on the road when I was at the back window or in the garden, and often hung about the bank of the creek for hours, like some animal. I don't think the others saw him, and when they did they thought it was Parmlee for Euphemia. Even Euphemia thought so too, and that was why she was so conceited and hard to Parmlee towards the end. She thought it was Parmlee that night when Grant and Rice came; but it was Lige Curtis who had been watching the window lights in the rain, and who must have gone off at last to speak to you in the store. I always let Phemie believe that it was Parmlee—it seemed to please her."

There was not the least tone of mischief or superiority, or even of patronage in her manner. It was as quiet and cruel as the fate that might have led Lige to his destruction. Even her father felt a slight thrill of awe as she paused. "Then he never really spoke to you?" he asked hurriedly.

"Only once. I was gathering swamp lilies all alone, a mile below the bend of the creek, and he came upon me suddenly. Perhaps it was that I didn't jump or start—I didn't see anything to jump or start at—and he said, 'You're not frightened at me, Miss Harcourt, like the other girls? You don't think I'm drunk or half mad—as they do?' I don't remember exactly what I said, but it meant that whether he was drunk or half mad or sober I didn't see any reason to be afraid of him. And then he told me that if I was fond of swamp lilies I might have all I wanted at his place, and for the matter of that the place too, as he was going away, for he couldn't stand the loneliness any longer. He said that he had nothing in common with the place and the people—no more than *I* had—and that was what he had always fancied

in me. I told him that if he felt in that way about his place he ought to leave it, or sell it to some one who cared for it, and go away. That must have been in his mind when he offered it to you—at least that's what I thought when you told us you had bought it. I didn't know but what he might have told you—but you didn't care to say it before mother."

Mr. Harcourt sat gazing at her with breathless amazement. "And you—think that—Lige Curtis—lov—liked you?"

"Yes, I think he did—and that he does now!"

"*Now*!—What do you mean? The man is dead!" said Harcourt starting.

"That's just what I don't believe."

"Impossible! Think of what you are saying."

"I never could quite understand or feel that he was dead when everybody said so, and now that I've heard this story I *know* that he is living."

"But why did he not make himself known in time to claim the property?"

"Because he did not care for it."

"What did he care for then?"

"Me I suppose."

"But this calumny is not like a man who loves you."

"It is like a *jealous* one."

With an effort Harcourt threw off his bewildered incredulity and grasped the situation. He would have to contend with his enemy in the flesh and blood, but that flesh and blood would be very weak in the hands of the impassive girl beside him. His face lightened.

The same idea might have been in Clementina's mind when she spoke again, although her face had remained unchanged. "I do not see why *you* should bother yourself further about it," she said. "It is only a matter between myself and him; you can leave it to me."

"But if you are mistaken and he should not be living?"

"I am not mistaken. I am even certain now that I have seen him."



"Seen him!"

"Yes," said the girl with the first trace of animation in her face. "It was four or five months ago when we were visiting the Briones at Monterey. We had ridden out to the old Mission by moonlight. There were some Mexicans lounging around the *posada*, and one of them attracted my attention by the way he seemed to watch me, without revealing any more of his face than I could see between his *serape* and the black silk handkerchief that was tied around his head under his *sombrero*. But I knew he was an American—and his eyes were familiar. I believe it was he."

"Why did you not speak of it before?"

The look of animation died out of the girl's face. "Why should I?" she said listlessly. "I did not know of these reports then. He was nothing more to us. You wouldn't have cared to see him again." She rose, smoothed out her skirt and stood looking at her father. "There is one thing of course that you'll do at once."

Her voice had changed so oddly that he said quickly: "What's that?"

"Call Grant off the scent. He'll only frighten or exasperate your game, and that's what you don't want."

Her voice was as imperious as it had been previously listless. And it was the first time he had ever known her to use slang. It seemed as startling as if it had fallen from the marble lips above him.

"But I've promised him that we should go together to my lawyer tomorrow, and begin a suit against the proprietors of the *Clarion*."

"Do nothing of the kind. Get rid of Grant's assistance in this matter; and see the *Clarion* proprietor yourself. What sort of a man is he? Can you invite him to your house?"

"I have never seen him; I believe he lives at San José. He is a wealthy man and a large landowner there. You understand that after the first article appeared in his paper, and I

knew that he had employed your brother—although Grant says that he had nothing to do with it and left Fletcher on account of it—I could have no intercourse with him. Even if I invited him he would not come."

"He *must* come. Leave it to me." She stopped and resumed her former impassive manner. "I had something to say to you too, father. Mr. Shipley proposed to me the day we went to San Mateo."

Her father's eyes lit with an eager sparkle. "Well," he said quickly.

"I reminded him that I had known him only a few weeks, and that I wanted time to consider."

"Consider! Why, Clemmy, he's one of the oldest Boston families, rich from his father and grandfather—rich when I was a shopkeeper and your mother——"

"I thought you liked Grant?" she said quietly.

"Yes, but if *you* have no choice nor feeling in the matter, why Shipley is far the better man. And if any of the scandal should come to his ears——"

"So much the better that the hesitation should come from me. But if you think it better, I can sit down here and write to him at once declining the offer." She moved towards the desk.

"No! No! I did not mean that," said Harcourt quickly. "I only thought that if he did hear anything it might be said that he had backed out."

"His sister knows of his offer, and though she don't like it nor me, she will not deny the fact. By the way, you remember when she was lost that day on the road to San Mateo?"

"Yes."

"Well, she was with your son, John Milton, all the time, and they lunched together at Crystal Spring. It came out quite accidentally through the hotel-keeper."

Harcourt's brow darkened. "Did she know him before?"

"I can't say ; but she does now."

Harcourt's face was heavy with distrust. "Taking Shipley's offer and these scandals into consideration, I don't like the look of this, Clementina."

"I do," said the girl simply.

Harcourt gazed at her keenly and with the shadow of distrust still upon him. It seemed to be quite impossible, even with what he knew of her calmly cold nature, that she should be equally uninfluenced by Grant or Shipley. Had she some steadfast, lofty ideal—or perhaps some already absorbing passion of which he knew nothing? She was not a girl to betray it—they would only know it when it was too late. Could it be possible that there was still something between her and Lige that he knew nothing of? The thought struck a chill to his breast. She was walking towards the door, when he recalled himself with an effort.

"If you think it advisable to see Fletcher, you might run down to San José for a day or two with your mother, and call on the Ramirez. They may know him or somebody who does. Of course if *you* meet him and casually invite him it would be different."

"It's a good idea," she said quickly. "I'll do it and speak to mother now."

He was struck by the change in her face and voice ; they had both nervously lightened, as oddly and distinctly as they had before seemed to grow suddenly harsh and aggressive. She passed out of the room with girlish brusqueness, leaving him alone with a new and vague fear in his consciousness.

A few hours later Clementina was standing before the window of the drawing-room that overlooked the outskirts of the town. The moonlight was flooding the vast bluish Tasajara levels with a faint lustre as if the waters of the creek had once more returned to them. In the shadow of the curtain beside her Grant was facing her with anxious eyes.

"Then I must take this as your final answer, Clementina?"

"You must. And had I known of these calumnies before, had you been frank with me even the day we went to San Mateo, my answer would have been as final then, and you might have been spared any further suspense. I am not blaming you, Mr. Grant ; I am willing to believe that you thought it best to conceal this from me—even at that time when you had just pledged yourself to find out its truth or falsehood—yet my answer would have been the same. So long as this stain rests on my father's name I shall never allow that name to be coupled with yours in marriage or engagement ; nor will my pride or yours allow us to carry on a simple friendship after this. I thank you for your offer of assistance, but I cannot even accept that which might to others seem to allow some contingent claim. I would rather believe that when you proposed this inquiry and my father permitted it, you both knew that it put an end to any other relations between us."

"But, Clementina, you are wrong, believe me! Say that I have been foolish, indiscreet, mad—still the few who knew that I made these inquiries on your father's behalf know nothing of my hopes of *you*!"

"But *I* do, and that is enough for me."

Even in the hopeless preoccupation of his passion he suddenly looked at her with something of his old critical scrutiny. But she stood there calm, concentrated, self-possessed and upright. Yes! it was possible that the pride of this South-western shop-keeper's daughter was greater than his own.

"Then you banish me, Clementina?"

"It is we whom *you* have banished."

"Good-night."

"Good-bye."

He bent for an instant over her cold hand, and then passed out into the hall. She remained listening until the front door closed behind him. Then

she ran swiftly through the hall and up the staircase, with an alacrity that seemed impossible to the stately goddess of a moment before. When she had reached her bedroom and closed the door, so exuberant still and so uncontrollable was her levity and action, that without going round the bed which stood before her in the centre of the room, she placed her two hands upon it and lightly vaulted sideways across it to reach the window. There she watched the figure of Grant crossing the moonlit square. Then turning back into the half-lit room, she ran to the small dressing-glass placed at an angle on a toilet table against the wall. With her palms grasping her knees she stooped down suddenly and contemplated the mirror. It showed what no one but Clementina had ever seen—and she herself only at rare intervals—the laughing eyes and soul of a self-satisfied, material-minded, ordinary country girl!

#### CHAPTER X.

BUT Mr. Lawrence Grant's character in certain circumstances would seem to have as startling and inexplicable contradictions as Clementina Harcourt's, and three days later he halted his horse at the entrance of Los Gatos Rancho. The Home of the Cats—so called from the catamounts which infested the locality—which had for over a century lazily basked before one of the hottest cañons in the Coast Range, had lately been stirred into some activity by the American, Don Diego Fletcher, who had bought it, put up a saw-mill, and deforested the cañon. Still there remained enough suggestion of a feline haunt about it to make Grant feel as if he had tracked hither some stealthy enemy, in spite of the peaceful intimation conveyed by the sign on a rough boarded shed at the wayside, that the "Los Gatos Land and Lumber Company" held their office there.

A cigarette-smoking *peon* lounged before the door. Yes; Don Diego

was there, but as he had arrived from Santa Clara only last night and was going to Colonel Ramirez that afternoon he was engaged. Unless the business was important—but the cool, determined manner of Grant, even more than his words, signified that it *was* important, and the servant led the way to Don Diego's presence.

There certainly was nothing in the appearance of this sylvan proprietor and newspaper capitalist to justify Grant's suspicion of a surreptitious foe. A handsome man scarcely older than himself, in spite of a wavy mass of perfectly white hair which contrasted singularly with his brown moustache and dark sunburned face. So disguising was the effect of these contradictions, that he not only looked unlike anybody else, but even his nationality seemed to be a matter of doubt. Only his eyes, light blue and intelligent, which had a singular expression of gentleness and worry, appeared individual to the man. His manner was cultivated and easy. He motioned his visitor courteously to a chair.

"I was referred to you," said Grant almost abruptly, "as the person responsible for a series of slanderous attacks against Mr. Daniel Harcourt in the *Clarion*, of which paper I believe you are the proprietor. I was told that you declined to give the authority for your action, unless you were forced to by legal proceedings."

Fletcher's sensitive blue eyes rested upon Grant's with an expression of constrained pain and pity. "I heard of your inquiries, Mr. Grant; you were making them on behalf of this Mr. Harcourt or Harkutt"—he made the distinction with intentional deliberation—"with a view I believe to some arbitration. The case was stated to you fairly, I think; I believe I have nothing to add to it."

"That was your answer to the ambassador of Mr. Harcourt," said Grant coldly, "and as such I delivered it to him; but I am here to-day to speak on my own account."

What could be seen of Mr. Fletcher's lips appeared to curl in an odd smile. "Indeed, I thought it was—or would be—all in the family."

Grant's face grew more stern, and his grey eyes glittered. "You'll find my *status* in this matter so far independent that I don't propose, like Mr. Harcourt, either to begin a suit or to rest quietly under the calumny. Briefly, Mr. Fletcher, as you or your informant knows, I was the surveyor who revealed to Mr. Harcourt the value of the land to which he claimed a title from your man—this Elijah or Lige Curtis as you call him"—he could not resist this imitation of his adversary's supercilious affectation of precise nomenclature—"and it was upon my representation of its value as an investment that he began the improvements which have made him wealthy. If this title was fraudulently obtained all the facts pertaining to it are sufficiently related to connect me with the conspiracy."

"Are you not a little hasty in your presumption, Mr. Grant?" said Fletcher, with unfeigned surprise.

"That is for *me* to judge, Mr. Fletcher," returned Grant haughtily.

"But the name of Professor Grant is known to all California as beyond the breath of calumny or suspicion."

"It is because of that fact that I propose to keep it so."

"And may I ask in what way you wish me to assist you in so doing?"

"By promptly and publicly retracting in the *Clarion* every word of this slander against Harcourt."

Fletcher looked steadfastly at the speaker. "And if I decline?"

"I think you have been long enough in California, Mr. Fletcher, to know the alternative expected of a gentleman," said Grant coldly.

Mr. Fletcher kept his gentle blue eyes—in which surprise still overbalanced their expression of pained concern—on Grant's face.

"But is this not more in the style of Colonel Starbottle than Professor Grant?" he asked with a faint smile.

Grant rose instantly with a white face. "You will have a better opportunity of judging," he said, "when Colonel Starbottle has the honour of waiting upon you from me. Meantime, I thank you for reminding me of the indiscretion into which my folly, in still believing that this thing could be settled amicably, has led me."

He bowed coldly and withdrew. Nevertheless, as he mounted his horse and rode away, he felt his cheeks burning. Yet he had acted upon calm consideration; he knew that to the ordinary Californian experience there was nothing Quixotic nor exaggerated in the attitude he had taken. Men had quarrelled and fought on less grounds; he had even half convinced himself that he *had* been insulted, and that his own professional reputation demanded the withdrawal of the attack on Harcourt on purely business grounds; but he was not satisfied of the personal responsibility of Fletcher nor of his gratuitous malignity. Nor did the man look like a tool in the hands of some unscrupulous and hidden enemy. However, he had played his card. If he succeeded only in provoking a duel with Fletcher, he at least would divert the public attention from Harcourt to himself. He knew that his superior position would throw the lesser victim in the background. He would make the sacrifice; that was his duty as a gentleman, even if *she* would not care to accept it as an earnest of his unselfish love!

He had reached the point where the mountain track entered the Santa Clara turnpike when his attention was attracted by a handsome but old-fashioned carriage drawn by four white mules, which passed down the road before him and turned suddenly off into a private road. But it was not this picturesque gala equipage of some local Spanish grandee that brought a thrill to his nerves and a flash to his eye; it was the unmistakable, tall, elegant figure and handsome profile of Clementina, reclining in light gauzy wraps against the back seat! It was no fanciful re-

semblance, the outcome of his reverie—there never was any one like her!—it *was* she herself! But what was she doing here?

A *vaquero* cantered from the cross road where the dust of the vehicle still hung. Grant hailed him. Ah! it was a fine *carroza de cuatro mulas* that he had just passed! *Si, Señor*, truly; it was of Don José Ramirez who lived just under the hill. It was bringing company to the *casa*.

Ramirez! That was where Fletcher was going! Had Clementina known that he was one of Fletcher's friends? Might she not be exposed to unpleasantness, marked coolness, or even insult in that unexpected meeting? Ought she not to be warned or prepared for it? She had banished Grant from her presence until this stain was removed from her father's name, but could she blame him for trying to save her from contact with her father's slanderer? No! He turned his horse abruptly into the cross road and spurred forward in the direction of the *Casa*.

It was quite visible now—a low-walled, quadrangular mass of white-washed *adobe*, lying like a drift on the green hillside. The carriage and four had far preceded him, and was already half up the winding road towards the house. Later he saw them reach the courtyard and disappear within. He would be quite in time to speak with her before she retired to change her dress. He would simply say that while making a professional visit to Los Gatos Land Company Office he had become aware of Fletcher's connection with it, and accidentally of his intended visit to Ramirez. His chance meeting with the carriage on the highway had determined his course.

As he rode into the courtyard he observed that it was also approached by another road, evidently nearer Los Gatos, and probably the older and shorter communication between the two ranchos. The fact was significantly demonstrated a moment later. He had given his horse to a servant,

sent in his card to Clementina, and had dropped listlessly on one of the benches of the gallery surrounding the *patio*, when a horseman rode briskly into the opposite gateway, and dismounted with a familiar air. A waiting *peon* who recognised him, informed him that the Doña was engaged with a visitor, but that they were both returning to the gallery for chocolate in a moment. The stranger was the man he had left only an hour before—Don Diego Fletcher!

In an instant the idiotic fatuity of his position struck him fully. His only excuse for following Clementina had been to warn her of the coming of this man who had just entered, and who would now meet her as quickly as himself. For a brief moment the idea of quietly slipping out to the corral, mounting his horse again, and flying from the rancho, crossed his mind; but the thought that he would be running away from the man he had just challenged, and perhaps some new hostility that had sprung up in his heart against him, compelled him to remain. The eyes of both men met; Fletcher's in half-wondering annoyance, Grant's in ill-concealed antagonism. What they would have said is not known, for at that moment the voice of Clementina and Mrs. Ramirez were heard in the passage, and they both entered the gallery. The two men were standing together; it was impossible to see one without the other.

And yet Grant, whose eyes were instantly directed to Clementina, thought that she had noted neither. She remained for an instant standing in the doorway in the same self-possessed, coldly graceful pose he remembered she had taken on the platform at Tasajara. Her eyelids were slightly downcast as if she had been arrested by some sudden thought or some shy maiden sensitiveness; in her hesitation Mrs. Ramirez passed impatiently before her.

"Mother of God!" said that lively lady, regarding the two speechless men,



"is it an indiscretion we are making here—or are you dumb? You, Don Diego, are loud enough when you and Don José are together; at least introduce your friend."

Grant quickly recovered himself. "I am afraid," he said, coming forward, "unless Miss Harcourt does, that I am a mere trespasser in your house, Señora. I saw her pass in your carriage a few moments ago, and having a message for her I ventured to follow her here."

"It is Mr. Grant, a friend of my father's," said Clementina, smiling with equanimity as if just awakening from a momentary abstraction, yet apparently unconscious of Grant's imploring eyes; "but the other gentleman I have not the pleasure of knowing."

"Ah—Don Diego Fletcher, a countryman of yours; and yet I think he knows you not."

Clementina's face betrayed no indication of the presence of her father's foe, and yet Grant knew that she must have recognised his name as she looked towards Fletcher with perfect self-possession. He was too much engaged in watching her to take note of Fletcher's manifest disturbance or the evident effort with which he at last bowed to her. That this unexpected double meeting with the daughter of the man he had wronged, and the man who had espoused the quarrel, should be confounding to him appeared only natural. But he was unprepared to understand the feverish alacrity with which he accepted Doña Maria's invitation to chocolate, or the equally animated way in which Clementina threw herself into her hostess's Spanish levity. He knew it was an awkward situation that must be surmounted without a scene; he was quite prepared in the presence of Clementina to be civil to Fletcher, but it was odd that in this feverish exchange of courtesies and compliments *he*, Grant, should feel the greater awkwardness, and be the most ill at ease. He sat down and took his part in the conversation; he let it transpire for

Clementina's benefit, that he had been to Los Gatos only on business, yet there was no opportunity for even a significant glance, and he had the added embarrassment of seeing that she exhibited no surprise nor seemed to attach the least importance to his inopportune visit. In a miserable indecision he allowed himself to be carried away by the high-flown hospitality of his Spanish hostess, and consented to stay to an early dinner. It was part of the infelicity of circumstance that the voluble Doña Maria—electing him as the distinguished stranger above the resident Fletcher—monopolised him and attached him to her side. She would do the honours of her house; she must show him the ruins of the old Mission beside the corral; Don Diego and Clementina would join them presently in the garden. He cast a despairing glance at the placidly smiling Clementina, who was apparently equally indifferent to the evident constraint and assumed ease of the man beside her, and turned away with Mrs. Ramirez.

A silence fell upon the gallery so deep that the receding voices and footsteps of Grant and his hostess in the long passage were distinctly heard until they reached the end. Then Fletcher arose with an inarticulate exclamation. Clementina instantly put her finger to her lips, glanced around the gallery, extended her hand to him and saying "Come," half-led, half-dragged him into the passage. To the right she turned and pushed open the door of a small room that seemed a combination of boudoir and oratory, lit by a French window opening to the garden, and flanked by a large black and white crucifix with a *prie Dieu* beneath it. Closing the door behind them she turned and faced her companion. But it was no longer the face of the woman who had been sitting in the gallery; it was the face that had looked back at her from the mirror at Tasajara the night that Grant had left her—eager, flushed, material with commonplace excitement!

"Lige Curtis," she said.

"Yes," he answered passionately, "Lige Curtis, whom you thought dead! Lige Curtis, whom you once pitied, condoled with and despised! Lige Curtis! whose lands and property have enriched you! Lige Curtis! who would have shared it with you freely at the time, but whom your father juggled and defrauded of it! Lige Curtis, branded by him as a drunken outcast and suicide! Lige Curtis——"

"Hush!" She clapped her little hand over his mouth with a quick but awkward school-girl gesture—inconceivable to any who had known her usual languid elegance of motion—and held it there. He struggled angrily, impatiently, reproachfully, and then with a sudden characteristic weakness that seemed as much of a revelation as her once hoydenish manner—kissed it, when she let it drop. Then placing both her hands still girlishly on her slim waist and curtsying grotesquely before him, she said: "Lige Curtis! Oh, yes! Lige Curtis who swore to do everything for me! Lige Curtis, who promised to give up liquor for me—who was to leave Tasajara for me! Lige Curtis who was to reform, and keep his land as a nest-egg for us both in the future, and then who sold it—and himself—and me—to dad for a glass of whisky! Lige Curtis who disappeared, and then let us think he was dead, only that he might attack us out of the ambush of his grave!"

"Yes, but think what *I* have suffered all these years—not for the cursed land—you know I never cared for that—but for *you*—you, Clementina—you rich, admired, by every one; idolised, held far above me—*me*, the forgotten outcast, the wretched suicide—and yet the man to whom you had once plighted your troth. Which of those greedy fortune-hunters whom my money—my life-blood as you might have thought it was—attracted to you, did you care to tell that you had ever slipped out of the little garden gate at Sidon to meet that outcast!

Do you wonder that as the years passed and *you* were happy, *I* did not choose to be so forgotten? Do you wonder that when *you* shut the door on the past *I* managed to open it again—if only a little way—that its light might startle you?"

Yet she did not seem startled or disturbed, and remained only looking at him critically.

"You say that you have suffered," she replied with a smile. "You don't look it! Your hair is white, but it is becoming to you, and you are a handsomer man, Lige Curtis, than you were when I first met you; you are finer," she went on still regarding him, "stronger and healthier than you were five years ago; you are rich and prosperous, you have everything to make you happy, but——" here she laughed a little, held out both her hands, taking his and holding his arms apart in a rustic, homely fashion—"but you are still the same old Lige Curtis! It was like you to go off and hide yourself in that idiotic way; it was like you to let the property slide in that stupid, unselfish fashion; it was like you to get real mad, and say all those mean, silly things to dad, that didn't hurt him—in your regular looney style—for rich or poor, drunk or sober, ragged or elegant, plain or handsome—you're always the same Lige Curtis!"

In proportion as that material, practical, rustic self—which nobody but Lige Curtis had ever seen—came back to her, so in proportion the irresolute, wavering, weak and emotional vagabond of Sidon came out to meet it. He looked at her with a vague smile, his five years of childish resentment, albeit carried on the shoulders of a man mentally and morally her superior, melted away. He drew her towards him, yet at the same moment a quick suspicion returned.

"Well, and what are you doing here? Has this man who has followed you any right, any claim upon you?"

"None but what you in your folly have forced upon him! You have made him father's ally. I don't know



why he came here. I only know why I did—to find *you* ! ”

“ You suspected then ? ”

“ I *knew* ! Hush ! ”

The returning voices of Grant and of Mrs. Ramirez were heard in the courtyard. Clementina made a warning yet girlishly mirthful gesture, again caught his hand, drew him quickly to the French window, slipped through it with him into the garden, where they were quickly lost in the shadows of a ceanothus hedge.

“ They have probably met Don José in the orchard, and as he and Don Diego have business together, Doña Clementina has without doubt gone to her room and left them. For you are not very entertaining to the ladies to-day—you two *caballeros* ! You have much politics together, eh ?—or you have discussed and disagreed, eh ? I will look for the Senorita, and let you go, Don Distruido ! ”

It is to be feared that Grant's apologies and attempts to detain her were equally feeble—as it seemed to him that this was the only chance he might have of seeing her except in company with Fletcher. As Mrs. Ramirez left he lit a cigarette and listlessly walked up and down the gallery. But Clementina did not come, neither did his hostess return. A subdued step in the passage raised his hopes—it was only the grizzled *major domo*, to show him his room that he might prepare for dinner.

He followed mechanically down the long passage to a second corridor. There was a chance that he might meet Clementina, but he reached his room without encountering any one. It was a large vaulted apartment with a single window, a deep embrasure in the thick wall that seemed to focus like a telescope some forgotten, sequestered part of the leafy garden. While washing his hands, gazing absently at the green vignette framed by the dark opening, his attention was drawn to a movement of the foliage, stirred apparently by the rapid passage of two half-hidden figures. The quick flash of a feminine skirt seemed to indicate the coy flight of some romping maid of the *casa*, and the pursuit and struggle of her *vaquero* swain. To a despairing lover even the spectacle of innocent, pastoral happiness in others is not apt to be soothing, and Grant was turning impatiently away when he suddenly stopped with a rigid face and quickly approached the window. In her struggles with the unseen Corydon, the clustering leaves seemed to have yielded at the same moment with the coy Chloris, and parting—disclosed a stolen kiss ! Grant's hand lay like ice against the wall. For, disengaging Fletcher's arm from her waist and freeing her skirt from the foliage, it was the calm, passionless Clementina herself who stepped out, and moved pensively towards the *casa*.

(*To be continued.*)

## TALMA

AT the end of the year 1776 the pupils of M. Verdier's boarding-school in Paris were about to be dispersed for their Christmas holidays. Besides the usual distribution of prizes the occasion was to be marked by an event of special importance in the performance of a tragedy which the worthy schoolmaster had written for his scholars. Of the details of this play, which was called *Tamerlan*, or of how the youthful actors acquitted themselves before their friends and relatives, history is silent. One episode only is preserved to us,—an unrehearsed effect which occurred towards the end of the piece when a very small boy, whose part it was to relate the manner in which his friend had died, broke down sobbing in the midst of his recital and had to be carried from the stage. This child of ten years was the son of a French dentist who resided in Cavendish Square, and enjoyed a considerable practice in the West End of London. The boy was called François Joseph Talma; a surname so un-French that at a later period, when its bearer had become famous, quite a serious controversy arose among etymological experts, some maintaining that Talma was Arabic in origin, others that it was Dutch.

But François Joseph's sojourn at M. Verdier's was brought to a premature close by the boy's Voltairean enthusiasm, derived from his father, which he exhibited in a very unorthodox outburst against his spiritual director on the occasion of the refusal by the Church to accord burial rites to the Philosopher of Ferney. The offence was unpardonable, and young Talma was in consequence removed from M. Verdier's after a stay of not more than three years. Re-

joining his father in London, he amused himself, together with other young compatriots, by giving recitations and dramatic sketches from the French classical repertory at the houses of those persons of quality with whom it was then the vogue to affect things Parisian. And so successful were these private representations that some of the more adventurous among the amateurs conceived the idea of establishing a regular French playhouse in London. Subscriptions came in readily enough from the West End; but when, more money being still needed, an attempt was made to canvass the City, the ambassadors discovered their mistake, and had to retire empty-handed, after hearing some very blunt expressions of opinion. The centre of wealth was also the centre of patriotism; and the notion of a French theatre in the British capital, according to Talma,<sup>1</sup> "was revolting to the true sons of Albion." As a set-off to this repulse Talma was pressed by various persons of eminence,—among others, he says, by Burke, Fox, and Sheridan—to adopt the English stage as his profession. The proposal was flattering and the prospect favourable, for the succession to Garrick was still open; but the father was minded that his son should qualify himself to practise as a dentist, and early in the year 1784 the youth was sent back to Paris, "travelling in one of those six-horse coaches which accomplish the journey between London and Dover in so rapid and pleasant a fashion."

This sojourn of five years in London deserves mention because it had the effect of initiating Talma at the most impressionable age into the beauties of the English drama, and inspiring

<sup>1</sup> *Mémoires de Talma*, recueillis par Alexandre Dumas.

him with that admiration for Shakespearian models which counted for so much in his after life. Though he has left no record of the event, it is possible that he now saw for the first time Mrs. Siddons and the elder Kemble, the latter of whom he entertained at his house in Paris some twenty years later.

At all events, Talma returned to the French capital with little taste for dentistry and with a great passion for acting. Naturally, in spite of professional duties, he gravitated towards literary and dramatic centres. Madame de Genlis was struck with his powers as a reciter; Molé, who was then playing Almaviva in the *Mariage de Figaro*, took him up, gave him the *entrée* of the green-room, and introduced him to Beaumarchais. Opinion on the young man's future was, of course, divided; and in deciding to follow a theatrical career Talma, like other great actors, went contrary to the more prudent counsels of his family. His first appearance, in 1787, seemed, it must be confessed, to justify the doubters, for as Séide in the tragedy of *Mahomet* the *débutant* attracted very little notice, the Press spoke the usual commonplaces about a promising young actor,—that was all. He had not taken the town by storm as Rachel did at her *début* years afterwards. And from this time till 1789, when he was elected a *sociétaire* of the Comédie Française, Talma in the occasional characters which he personated was given no opportunity of "creating" a great part. He waited, however, and worked,—worked principally with David the painter, whose friend he had become and with whom he studied the antique, reflecting how incongruous it was that the heroes of Greece and Rome should be represented on the French stage in powder and lace and knee-breeches.

Now it happened about this time that Talma had been cast for the part of a tribune in *Brutus*,—a chance which enabled him to make an experiment meditated by more than one

of his predecessors, but not hitherto adventured. So David and Talma conspired together, and the little plot succeeded well enough,—with the public at least, to whom a Roman tribune in a real toga and with bare arms and legs was a delightful novelty. With the other members of the company, however, it was quite a different thing. Jealous of new ideas, imbued with the traditions of their theatre, they were indignant at this innovation; the actresses, in particular, were shocked at the unseemly display of arms and legs. "Gracious Heavens!" exclaimed Mademoiselle Contat with a littlescream, as Talma emerged from his dressing-room, ready to go on. "How hideous he is! For all the world like one of those old statues!" And a few minutes afterwards, Madame Vestris, who happened to be on the stage in the same scene, took an opportunity of saying to him in an undertone, "Why, Talma, your arms are bare!" "Yes," he replied, "like the Romans." "Why, Talma, you have no trousers on!" "No, the Romans did not wear them." "*Cochon!*" ejaculated poor Madame Vestris, and her feelings overpowering her, she had to go off the stage. Even with revolution in the air, as it was in 1789, it took some little time to habituate Parisian players and playgoers to so radical a change. The next actor, one of the old school, who filled a similar part, made great difficulties about donning the toga. He was induced to do so eventually, but only on the condition that two pockets should be let into the back of the garment,—one of these being for his handkerchief, the other for his snuff-box!

This beginning, then, of reform in costume Talma made at a time when he was the youngest and least important member of Molière's House; and for this very reason perhaps he was able to take a step which in a more prominent man would have met with less indulgence.

Greater things than this, however,

were at hand. In November, 1789, the Comédie, yielding to repeated pressure from the author, consented to produce the tragedy of *Charles IX.* by Marie Joseph Chénier, which had been accepted some time previously. In the existing state of public feeling the play was undoubtedly risky; and it was natural that the Court party should strenuously resist the representation of a piece which displayed a king of France in so odious a light. But the authority exercised over the Comédie by the Gentlemen-in-Waiting seems to have been shared in an indefinite way by the Municipal Council of Paris, with the result that the two neutralised each other. The Court prohibited, but the Mayor sanctioned, and in the end *Charles IX.* was produced. Among the actors themselves, however, there was a repugnance to undertake a part so sure to be unpopular as that of Charles. This was Talma's chance; he accepted the part which others refused, and made his name in the character of the weak, hypocritical, and cruel king who, influenced by Catherine de Médicis, sanctioned, and even assisted in, the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. This was Talma's real *début*, an impersonation great in itself, and rendered still more startling by the circumstances of the moment. So strongly indeed were the feelings of the audience stirred that, after a few performances, the Town Council, not yet wholly revolutionary, was induced by the Clergy to prohibit the play. For a while popular indignation smouldered, till at length, on an evening in July 1790, it flamed out in one of those scenes which so often converted the stage of the Théâtre Français into the most riotous of political platforms. On this particular occasion *Epimenides* was being played to a full house, which included the deputies from Provence now present in Paris. By pre-arrangement, and prompted by Mirabeau, these spectators interrupted the performance with loud cries for *Charles IX.* To pacify them, one of the

actors, Naudet by name, advanced to the footlights and explained that *Charles IX.* could not be given because Madame Vestris who played Catherine de Médicis was seriously indisposed, while Saint-Prix who took the Cardinal's part was also laid up. But the actors were known to be Royalist and reactionary; the excuse was regarded as a subterfuge, and the uproar continued. Then Talma came forward, and promised that *Charles IX.* should be played the next evening, that Madame Vestris would make an effort to perform her part, and that the Cardinal's part should be read. Thus peace was restored, and next evening Chénier's play was performed before an audience inspired by the presence of Mirabeau, Danton, and Camille des Moulins.

The affair, however, did not end here. Talma's conduct was hotly resented by his colleagues, who were furious that he should have compromised them, as they averred, upon his own responsibility. Personal jealousy embittered political differences. The point of honour was settled between Naudet and Talma in the usual way, and fortunately with the usual result; and, what was more serious, by an almost unanimous vote of the *sociétaires* the offending member was expelled. The justice or injustice of this measure was argued on both sides in copious manifestoes; but for the rights and wrongs of the case the Parisian public cared little. It was sufficient for them that Talma, a friend of liberty and progress, had been censured and cast out by the upholders of privilege and tradition. He became at once a popular hero. "We thought," says the actor Fleury in his Memoirs, "that Talma had partisans; we discovered that he had a whole nation at his back." The expulsion, whether justifiable or not, was in short a blunder; and it led to such disturbances that by order of the Mayor the theatre was closed until the members had agreed to receive Talma back; which they did with a

very bad grace, and revenged themselves by allotting him the most insignificant characters.

Meanwhile as the situation outside grew daily more acute, so within the Comédie Française the political rupture became more distinct. Talma was not the only Patriot in the company; here also there was a Red Faction although a minority. The house in the Faubourg Saint Germain (the original home of the Comédie, on the site of the present Odéon) was divided against itself. In this state of things the dissentients accepted an invitation from the directors of what was then the Théâtre du Palais Royal, whither accordingly Talma migrated, accompanied by Madame Vestris, Monval, Dugazon and others. Thus a rival Théâtre Français was set up in the Rue Richelieu, where the Français now stands. The first effort of the new combination, *Henri VIII.* by Chénier, was not fortunate, in spite of Talma as the King, Madame Vestris as Anne Boleyn, and Mademoiselle Desgarcins as Jane Seymour; but Corneille's *Cid*, with Talma in the chief part, was more successful. On the whole the rival theatres were pretty evenly balanced; and Talma soon found himself strong enough to attempt what his mind had long been set on,—a Shakespearian, or rather quasi-Shakespearian, character in the part of King John in Ducis' play of *Jean Sans-terre*, to be followed after a short while by the same author's *Othello*.

At this point the tragedian's professional career was crossed by a domestic event of some consequence,—his marriage with his first wife, Mademoiselle Julie Careau, a lady who was several years his senior, a lady of wealth, of wit, of literary and political tastes. Whatever may have been the motives of the match, and it was generally represented as, on the man's side at least, solely one of convenience, its effect was to relieve Talma from a growing load of debt. To the expenses usual and almost inevitable for a young man when first

admitted to membership of the Comédie, there was added in Talma's case a natural tendency to extravagance. He was one of those whose ideas of economy are limited to religiously making every day an entry of fresh liabilities, regarding this as an excellent method of keeping accounts. But besides its financial advantages, the marriage resulted also in bringing Talma into immediate connection with public affairs. For Madame Talma's house in the Rue Chantereine supplied one of the leading *salons* of Republican sentiment. Here mustered Vergniaud, Condorcet, Roland, Dumouriez, and other chiefs of the Girondists; there was also a literary and artistic element, represented by men like Arnault, Ducis, and David, but politics predominated. Talma himself seems to have been rather the victim of these brilliant gatherings, if we may believe the account left us by his second wife, who describes him as being in the habit, when he returned from the theatre, of avoiding the noise and the lights up stairs by taking refuge in the kitchen, where his old cook gave him soup and sympathy.<sup>1</sup> None the less he experienced the inconveniences of being a politician *malgré lui*; for as the Girondists declined before the advance of the Terrorists, the house in the Rue Chantereine became suspected. One evening a *fête* was being given here to General Dumouriez, who had returned to Paris after his victory at Valmy. Music and song were in full swing, when suddenly the door opened and a figure appeared which sent a shudder of repugnance and fear through the whole company. This kill-joy was Marat who, with two attendants, had come nominally to seek an interview with Dumouriez on urgent public business, in reality, perhaps, to see what material might be collected for accusations. The uninvited guest met with a cold reception, in revenge for which he published in *L'Ami du Peuple*, and laid before the Jacobin

<sup>1</sup> *Études sur l'Art Théâtral*, par Madame Veuve Talma.



Club, a strong indictment expressive of his indignation at finding "the son of Thalia feasting the son of Mars." Nor was the incident forgotten; long after the Tribune of the People had fallen beneath the knife of Charlotte Corday, Talma lived in constant alarm, afraid to venture forth at night, and expecting that each day would bring the fatal decree of arrest.

There is, in fact, no more lamentable sight than the Théâtre Français between the years 1793 and 1795. The secession from the old Comédie has been already mentioned. The theatre in the Faubourg Saint Germain, conservative and aristocratic, was a perpetual offence to the ruling powers; and so before long it was closed on the charge of incivism, and its actors and actresses lodged in prison where they remained for the most part till the fall of Robespierre. Their persecutions and perils do not belong to this subject; but there is one little incident concerning Talma,—a graceful pendant to that instance of brotherly love which M. Sardou has not been allowed to commemorate in *Thermidor*. Among the members of the Comédie who were personally antagonistic to Talma, none was more conspicuous than Fleury. Fleury, as a Royalist, was now in prison, and somehow a document in his handwriting,—a pedigree establishing the kinship of Charlotte Corday with the great Corneille—had fallen into the hands of a rascal who, recognising the value of this piece of paper, determined to levy blackmail. Meeting Talma he inquired for the address of Fleury's sister, pretending that he had a bill against Fleury; but Talma, knowing his man and suspecting the nature of the business, declined to give him information. He offered, however, to settle the bill himself. After long haggling, and at a considerable price, the negotiation was effected, and thus Talma saved his *confrère* from a fate not doubtful had this glorification of Charlotte been laid before Collot d'Herbois—once an actor himself, and now the most im-

placable enemy of the profession. It is satisfactory to learn that this good deed afterwards came indirectly to Fleury's knowledge, and helped towards the reconciliation which was ultimately accomplished.

Meanwhile, the old Comédie having been closed, the house in the Rue de Richelieu, where Talma played, continued to exist on the vilest sufferance. Styled now the Théâtre of Liberty and Equality, it justified its title by the most outrageous travesties of patriotism. Not only was its repertory (*Brutus*, *William Tell*, *The Death of Caesar*, and the like) carefully chosen so as to inculcate the virtue of tyrannicide, but not even a word suggestive of the old *régime* was admitted, and *comte*, *baron*, *marquis* were expunged, wherever they occurred, and replaced, without regard to rhyme or rhythm, by plain *citoyen*; so utterly was Art degraded to the lowest level of Sansculottism. "We had ceased," says Talma, "to be actors; we had become public functionaries."

And so things went on until, with the fall of Robespierre, we arrive at the most momentous event in Talma's life.

"After the curtain had fallen at the close of the *Trois Cousins*, Michaut entered the green-room accompanied by a young man of twenty-two or so in the uniform of a captain of artillery. I observed his features, which were striking; he was small, thin, very dark—almost black; his long hair fell on both sides of his head, almost to his shoulders; his eyes were keen and penetrating, and every now and then assumed a searching fixity." The young man was Napoleon Buonaparte, and these words contain Talma's first impression of him. They refer to the year 1792, but the acquaintance begun in that year does not appear to have been resumed, owing no doubt to Napoleon's absence from Paris, until the closing days of the Reign of Terror. At that time the two must have met frequently, either in the *salon* of Madame Tallien, or in David's studio,

or in Talma's own house which formed a refuge for the impossible people of all parties, giving simultaneous shelter to a Royalist (concealed in the attic) and to a Terrorist (hidden in the cellar). The moment for the "whiff of grape-shot" had not yet arrived, and the young Corsican officer, out of favour with the Government, was idling about in Paris, without money and without employment, very despondent of the future, and very much tempted to fling himself into the Seine. It was now that Talma took him up, lent him books to read, lent him money too, it is said, and procured him admission to the green-room, a compliment to be afterwards repaid by the *entrées* of the Tuileries. The details of this early association are uncertain and susceptible of embroidery; but the fact remains, and accounts in some measure for that unceasing interest in the drama and dramatic literature which marks the great usurper's whole career, and might form the subject of an as yet unwritten Life of Napoleon as an Amateur of Letters and Art.

Returning to Paris in the December of 1797 from his victorious Italian campaign, Buonaparte bought from Talma the house in the Rue Chantierine (hereafter known as the Rue de la Victoire) and there installed himself with his wife Josephine, entertaining at his table many celebrities, going frequently to the theatre and to the opera, and finally, on the eve of starting for his Egyptian expedition, witnessing Talma's performance of the *Macbeth* of Ducis. This latter took place at the Théâtre Feydeau where several members of the Comédie were now playing, and at the same theatre a few weeks later (May 25th, 1798) Talma sustained the part of Kaleb in Laya's *Falkland*, an early and (as it proved) a premature specimen of the Romantic drama.

At length, after vicissitudes which it would be long to narrate, the scattered members of Molière's House were gathered together again at the Théâtre de la République, henceforth

to be their permanent home. In taking this step the Minister of the Interior, M. François de Neufchâteau, was supported by all men of letters, with the notable exception of Beaumarchais, who, now at the close of his life, advocated free competition as best for the interests of Art. But the majority held to the principle of a subsidised theatre, and early in the year 1799 the company was reorganised with a staff of thirty-four *sociétaires* and seven *pensionnaires*, the *doyen* of the former being Molé and the latest recruit the famous Mademoiselle Mars.

The close of the Directorial Era forms (in the opinion of Talma's most recent biographer<sup>1</sup>) a period in the tragedian's career,—a period in which his talent was ripening, though its greatness was not yet undisputed; for there were still not a few who contrasted him unfavourably with his predecessor Lekain, and disapproved of his unconventional delivery, his fidelity of costume, and his realism of gesture.

The years 1799 to 1803 are not marked by many new "creations," partly because, brilliant as was the company at the Comédie, there was an exceptional dearth of talent among dramatic authors; partly because Talma was more anxious to perfect himself in standard parts, such as Orestes or Nero, than to essay new ones; for, like our own Garrick, he was persuaded that the lifetime of man is not enough for the study of certain characters. Meanwhile at La Malmaison and at St. Cloud, where the First Consul and his family occupied themselves almost as much with the drama as with politics, Talma's services were in constant request—sometimes to coach the Buonapartes for their amateur performances, sometimes to join with Mademoiselles Georges and Duchesnois in playing Corneille and Racine. For a moment, indeed, his supremacy was seriously challenged by Lafon, a younger member of the com-

<sup>1</sup> M. Alfred Copin's *Talma et la Révolution* and *Talma et l'Empire*.

pany, who had attained great popularity, especially in *chevaleresque* characters such as Achilles or Orosmanes. This Lafon seems to have been little blest with modesty, and was in the habit of referring contemptuously to his rival as "the other,"—a fatuity which one day called down upon him a well-merited snub. "M. Lafon," said the Duc de Lauraguais, "I observe that you are far too frequently *the one*, and not sufficiently often *the other*." The struggle, however, was short and decisive, and by the voice of the people no less than by imperial patronage Talma's superiority was established.

In relation to Napoleon,—a part of whose policy was, of course, to revive the traditions of the Grand Monarque,—the Comédie now occupied a position very similar to that which, at its foundation, it had occupied towards Louis XIV. ; only, instead of being players-in-ordinary to the King, its members were now players-in-ordinary to the Emperor. In this capacity the calls made upon them were frequent and continuous. Thus, when after his victory at Austerlitz Napoleon had returned to Paris, a brilliant series of classical representations was instituted at St. Cloud, in which Talma bore all the leading parts.

To this time may be referred most of those conversations between the Emperor and his favourite actor, of which fragments have come down to us on more or less good authority. The familiar legend, that Napoleon took lessons from Talma in the pose and deportment suitable to imperial dignity, is sufficiently refuted by Talma himself, when he says that so far from needing instruction, it was Napoleon who laid down the law on these points. Very concisely too and dogmatically did he lay it down, as when he thus criticised Talma's representation of Cæsar in *Le Mort de Pompée*: "You use your arms too much; rulers of empires are not so lavish of movement; they know that a gesture from them

is an order, and that a glance means death." And again, of Nero in *Britannicus*: "You should gesticulate less; and remember that, when persons of high position are agitated by passion, or preoccupied by weighty thoughts, their tone no doubt is slightly raised, but their speech no less remains natural. You and I, for example, are at this moment making history, and yet we are conversing in quite an ordinary way."

The Emperor, it is well known, was lavish of pecuniary help to art and artists. One day Talma observed to him that the Opera received a larger subvention than the Comédie. "No doubt," replied Napoleon; "but the Opera is the luxury of the nation; you are its glory."

After a long provincial tour undertaken in 1807, Talma at the end of the year assisted in the festivities held at Fontainebleau on the occasion of the Queen of Westphalia's marriage. In the September of 1808 came the historic gathering at Erfurt,—the barn converted into a theatre, and the *beau parterre de rois*. Then, released for a while from attendance at Court, Talma returned to Paris and resumed his original and favourite parts of Hamlet, Othello, and Macbeth, in the tragedies of Ducis. The experiment was hazardous, and all the actor's immense popularity was needed to carry it through. For under the Empire, partly from Napoleon's predilections, partly from the scarcity of fresh plays, the French stage was practically monopolised by Corneille, Racine, and, to a less extent, Voltaire; and the works of these masters, together with the few and not very remarkable productions of contemporary authors, had hitherto constituted the repertory of Talma. His excellence, indeed, in whatever part he undertook was now a matter of course, and amid the consenting chorus of praise one voice alone was raised in opposition, the voice of Geoffroy, the theatrical critic of the *Journal de l'Empire*, a trenchant and



powerful writer, but a man who seems from the first to have been invincibly prejudiced against Talma. That the strictures of Geoffroy, based mainly on the degeneracy of acting since Lekain's day, were ludicrously unjust, has never been questioned. But even Geoffroy, with the best desire to curse, was sometimes constrained to bless; and his criticism of Talma in these parts of Hamlet, Othello, and Macbeth (where no comparison with Lekain was possible) is instructive because it is directed, not against the actor,—who indeed is praised—but against the author. The French public were not perhaps more prepared for Shakespeare then than twenty years earlier, but even the most old-fashioned critic had come to recognise the impossibility of Ducis' compromise. "Take away the barbarian's form,"—writes Geoffroy—"and you take away his good points: Shakespeare must be left to go in his own bold untrammelled way;" a judgment which, though it might have been expressed in more complimentary terms, is at any rate something of an advance on the Voltairean idea.

But the most striking testimony to Talma's impersonation of Hamlet (his favourite part) is that of Madame de Staël, who had obtained leave to come from Switzerland as far as Lyons, where he was playing. The illustrious exile was at this time completing her work on Germany, and besides the appreciation of Talma contained therein, she wrote him two enthusiastic letters singling out for special praise his rendering of the Hamlet of Ducis and of Orestes in the *Iphigénie en Tauride*.

From Lyons, Talma returned to his duties at the Tuileries and St. Cloud. Like the other members of the Comédie, he found "starring" in the provinces a pleasant and profitable occupation; but these absences, becoming more and more fashionable, had seriously impaired the efficiency of the Théâtre Français, where it was often difficult to get together an adequate company for some particular representation;

and it was mainly to check these abuses of the *congé* system that Napoleon issued in 1812 his famous Moscow decree settling the rights and privileges of the members. The Emperor was perhaps not conscious, and not even Talma would have dared to hint it to him, that this disorganisation of the national theatre was largely due to his own capricious demands upon the players; for when, after Lutzen, he had entered Dresden, couriers were again despatched post-haste to collect the actors and actresses to that city, and a second edition of the Erfurt programme was gone through, though this time without the *parterre de rois*.

A year later the Allies entered Paris, and amid the general Bourbon reaction the Comédie Française made haste to testify its acquiescence in the new order by presenting Royalist pieces, or pieces with Royalist interpolations and allusions. On one of these nights when he had been playing Achilles in the *Iphigénie en Aulide*, it was Talma's lot to come forward after the fall of the curtain and read some verses of welcome to the new king. That he did so was made a reproach to him by those who saw in his conduct an act of ingratitude to his fallen patron and benefactor. The balance of testimony, however, seems to prove that the affair was not premeditated on Talma's part, but was forced upon him suddenly and against his will. Indeed, according to Régnier, the situation was saved by a marvelous *tour de force* of the actor, who, in reading this compulsory laudation of the Bourbons, managed to infuse such a melancholy of despair into his tone and manner, that when the end was reached, instead of the enthusiasm appropriate to the occasion, not a sound was heard, the audience remaining blank and silent as though they had listened to their own death-sentence!

Very delicate and difficult just now both towards the public and towards their colleagues, must have been the position of those members of the

Comédie whom Napoleon had especially favoured ; but Art, of course, has its exemptions, and this conviction may have solaced Talma, Mademoiselle Georges, and Mademoiselle Mars in their inevitable compromise between the past and the present, between inclination and circumstance. Talma himself, though he joined in greeting Napoleon's return from Elba, left Paris soon afterwards for the provinces, so that he did not witness the second fall of the Empire. Nor, it must be said, did Louis XVIII. show any revengeful spirit towards Napoleon's favourite ; on the contrary, he summoned Talma to his presence, and having congratulated him on his skill graciously added,—“ And remember, M. Talma, I am entitled to be exacting ; I have seen Lekain play.”

Under these conditions, then, and in the enjoyment of an unrivalled popularity, the tragedian entered upon the last decade of his life. A year or two before the fall of Napoleon he had been relieved by the death of Geoffroy from the last of those praisers of the past who bemoaned themselves as “ being reduced to living upon their recollections,” and the place of Geoffroy on the *Journal de l'Empire* (which with the Restoration had become the *Journal des Débats*) was filled by a critic of a very different stamp in Charles Nodier. Nodier, the learned bibliophile and naturalist, the author of *Smarra* and joint author of that mysterious *Vampire* which set young Dumas first thinking on the employment of the supernatural,—Nodier, the advocate of Romantic principles in days before ever that name had been heard, was not likely to find fault with an actor for departing from conventional methods. And, curiously enough, whereas to the old school Talma's naturalness had been a main stumbling-block, Nodier on the contrary,—writing of his performance of Ulysses in Lebrun's tragedy of that name—criticised his voice as being too artificial, too sepulchral. Nodier's opinion, however, in this particular

instance, must not be taken as typical either of his own utterances or of those of others. It stands, in fact, almost alone amid an admiration so universal and so uniform that one would hardly exaggerate in saying that, during the last years of his life, Talma's sole critic was Talma himself. And none certainly could have been sterner or more exacting ; for with him, as with all lovers of Art, self-satisfaction was barred by the consciousness of an ideal. Among the most notable of his impersonations in this period may be named Germanicus in Arnault's tragedy of that name (1817), Leicester in Lebrun's *Marie Stuart* (1820), and in 1821 the chief part in the tragedy of *Sylla* by M. de Jouy—a character in which as the Roman Dictator Talma presented the Parisian public with a study which vividly recalled to them the fortunes, and even the features, of their own fallen Dictator. As Danville in the *Ecole des Vieillards* by Casimir Delavigne he essayed in 1823 a comedy-character,—or rather a character in comedy. Twice before in his career Talma had taken similar parts with success, and he was always said to have had an ambition to play Molière ; but the traditions of the French stage drew so distinct a line between Tragedy and Comedy that his experiments in the latter must only be regarded as meant to show what he could have done. Finally in 1826 he appeared for the last time as Charles VI. in Delaville's tragedy,—a character in which his representation of the King's madness is spoken of by those who witnessed it as a masterpiece of pathos. In October of 1826 Talma succumbed to an internal malady from which he had long suffered, and his death,—the news of which interrupted Frédérick Lemaître's wedding festival—was felt as a personal loss by the public, who throughout the illness of their favourite actor had insisted every evening at the Comédie Française, before the play began, on having the daily bulletin of his health read out to them.

From 1789 to 1826 Talma, besides his constant representations of standard characters, had "created" seventy-one new parts. As an exponent of the masterpieces of Corneille and Racine he was the successor, though not the pupil, of Lekain. Lekain was the first actor to substitute for the artificial declamation then in vogue, a more natural utterance and delivery; and in this respect Talma followed and went further than his predecessor. Lekain, too, had meditated a reform in the matter of costume; but it was reserved for Talma to initiate that reform and to establish at the very outset of his career, a principle which he consistently carried out by the most minute attention to correctness of dress and surrounding. To the eyes of contemporaries, however, the differences between the two men were more obvious than their resemblances. Roughly speaking, Lekain stood for the old school of actors, whose watchword in speech and gesture was Dignity; while Talma was the pioneer of Naturalness. The terms, of course, beg the question; but if the perfection of the tragedian consists in a proportionate blending of these two qualities, the palm must be assigned to Talma.

Another point of comparison between the two is well illustrated by the testimony of Madame de Staël (in *L'Allemagne*). After praising Talma's attitudes, his voice, his appreciation of the author's meaning, she notices his improvement upon previous interpretations of well-known characters, thus:

In *Andromaque*, when Hermione accuses Orestes of having murdered Pyrrhus, Orestes answers,

Et ne m'avez-vous pas

Vous-même ici tantôt ordonné son trépas?

In this passage Lekain used to dwell on each word as though to recall every circumstance of the order he had received. Now that would be well enough in the presence of a judge, but before the woman one loves, despair at finding her unjust

should be the one feeling that fills the soul. And that was how Talma conceived it,—speaking the first words with a frenzied force, then falling to a lower note in the next, and sinking at the last to a depth of prostration in which he could barely articulate.

This power of understanding and nicely interpreting the full meaning of the author depends on a literary faculty which few actors have possessed so conspicuously as Talma. To be convinced of this it is sufficient to look at the letters that passed between him and Ducis,—a correspondence which, while it attests the most cordial relations between author and actor, shows also that the latter, without actual collaboration, was responsible for many changes and improvements in the text.

And the mention of Ducis leads to the consideration of Talma in contemporary drama,—in those plays which were either written for him or with which he is especially identified. Foremost among these are the Shakespearian adaptations of Ducis, which Lekain had declined to accept on the ground that "it would be difficult to get a pit, accustomed to the substantial beauties of Corneille and the exquisite tenderness of Racine, to digest the crudities of Shakespeare." Talma on the other hand found in these modifications of *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and *Macbeth* his favourite studies, and the nearest approach which was then possible towards the freedom and fulness of the English drama. That he did so conquer his public, and force it to applaud, is the most potent proof of his genius; it is certain that no other actor of the time could have done so. For a generation, indeed, which has seen the triumphs of M. Mounet-Sully in the *Hamlet* of Shakespeare, it may be hard to understand the daring nature of the task which Talma undertook. Yet he had to contend, it must be remembered, not only against the orthodox literary contempt for Shakespeare, but also against the bitter political hatred of England and things English which

prevailed through the Empire and the early years of the Restoration. There is, in fact, abundant evidence that the French public, however much they may have been fascinated by Talma's interpretation of Ducis, infinitely preferred to see him in anything else.

Thus he was compelled, for the majority of his new parts, to have recourse to that intermediate school of writers with whom it was his fate to be contemporary, and whom the world has agreed to disdain as the Pseudo-Classicists. How he lamented this poverty of his age, how he yearned towards that new era the advent of which he could partly discern, and how at last he died just too soon to witness the birth of the Drama of Natural Passion—all this was a favourite theme with the young Romanticists who claimed Talma as their ideal of an actor. On the other hand the same man was equally the hero of the Classicists, who in their celebrated petition of 1829 referred to him as being the last true exponent of Art; a curious position, but one which does not altogether need commiseration. It is admitted that the dramatists of the Decadence were at least skilful playwrights—that they knew perfectly how *charpenter une pièce*; and when the piece was thus blocked out and garnished with an appropriate stock of sentiments, Talma was allowed full scope to animate the skeleton according to his will, thus “creating” in far more than the conventional sense those characters which he played. How he would have figured in the more melodramatic parts which suited Lemâitre so admirably may be a matter of speculation; but it is certain that he would not have found in the authors of the new school men so compliant as the Arnaults, the Lemerriers, the Jouys and the rest, whose plays he popularised, and who, conscious of the fact, bowed the knee and worshipped.

Apart, however, from academic questions of this sort, apart also from a thorough mastery of the theory of his art (the principles of which he em-

bodied in a short treatise on acting), there remains the secret of that marvellous fascination which Talma exercised over his age. It would be futile to resort to commonplace eulogies about the “sympathy between the actor and his audience,” the “personal magnetism of Talma” and so forth, for these things bear no genuine sound to other times, and are as empty of meaning as would be a mere catalogue of the parts he played. Since the influence of the living actor has to be compensated for by an almost complete oblivion with posterity, all that one can honestly do is to record those personal details of the man which seem to have counted for most in his professional life.

Of Talma's appearance Lamartine, referring to the year 1818, writes: “He was a man of rather massive build and middle height; the Roman type of his features and the dull tint of his complexion recalled some bronze cast of an Emperor; his forehead was wide, his eyes large and soft, his cheeks somewhat sunken, his mouth fine and delicate.”<sup>1</sup> This description, tallying sufficiently well with the impression derived from the bust which stands in the peristyle of the Théâtre Français, shows that Nature had done her part towards moulding the tragedian. Liable to a nervous derangement which compelled frequent absences from the stage, Talma's mental habit was that of a profound and morbid melancholy—so acute, we are told, that the sight of human beauty was painful to him by its suggestion of inevitable death and corruption.

Akin to such a temperament is the quality of abstraction, in Talma's case a genuine preoccupation in his art, showing itself sometimes in amusing instances of absence of mind,—as when, descending the stairs with Mademoiselle Desgarcins, and having forgotten to offer her his arm, he replied to the lady's expostulatory gesture by an—“Eh! what? . . . take hold of the banister!” at other times in a total forgetfulness of his purpose and sur-

<sup>1</sup> *Cours familier de Littérature.*

roundings,—as when, in the course of a lecture at the Conservatoire he illustrated the proper way in which a person overpowered by emotion falls to the ground, by going through the whole scene three times and on each occasion falling down himself, although he had begun by carefully impressing on his class that he would not actually execute the fall because the floor was very dusty and he had no wish to soil his clothes; at other times, again, in a pathetic desire to utilise even his own physical infirmity and suffering,—as when in his last illness he observed with satisfaction that his emaciated and sunken cheeks would suit him admirably for the part of Tiberius which he hoped soon to assume.

Of such sort was the man himself. To high natural qualifications he joined the results of profound and incessant study. And to these elements of greatness must be added that which the age itself supplied. Talma was the actor of the Revolution and of the Empire. He had witnessed the greatest horrors of France and her greatest glory; and he spoke to men who had

known these things and remembered them, men whom the pity and fear of Tragedy affected as a lively presentment of their own experiences.

“What was Talma?” says Châteaubriand. “Himself, his own age, and ancient time. His was the profound and concentrated passion of patriotism; his was the derangement of genius proper to that Revolution through which he had passed. . . Black Ambition, Remorse, Jealousy, the Melancholy of the soul, the Pain of the body, the madness which the gods inspire, the sorrow which human hearts can feel,—all this he knew. His mere entry on the stage, the sound of his voice alone, were powerfully tragic. Suffering and Thought were mingled on his brow, breathed in his immobility, his gestures, his step. . . Given over to sadness, expecting something unknown but decreed by a relentless Power, he advanced the bondslave of Destiny, inexorably chained betwixt Fatality and Fear.”<sup>1</sup>

A. F. DAVIDSON.

<sup>1</sup> *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe.*



## THE RIGHTS OF FREE LABOUR.

FOUR important legal decisions affecting the rights of the working classes have been given during this summer. The great edifice of our judge-made law is, generally speaking, like the Temple of Solomon, so silently built up, that many important additions are made to it which often pass unobserved except by comparatively few. In the cool judicial atmosphere of the Courts changes in the law (under the form of its interpretation) are quietly made, which could only be accomplished by legislation after a heated discussion in Parliament. Such is the case with at least one class of these decisions. They are so important, and have such marked and far-reaching consequences, that it is well to give them that attention which they fully deserve. Otherwise, many (and the majority of us are in the ranks of the employers or the employed) some day will find to their surprise that their rights and liabilities are far otherwise than they supposed them to be.

Of these four cases, two have reference to the relations of master and servant in their simplest forms. They are not so important as the others; but still they are important, in so far as they mark a gain for the wage-earning classes which is substantial, which at the same time is unalloyed by any concomitant evils, and which every one will welcome as being in accordance with justice and common-sense. They derive moreover additional significance from being decisions of the highest Court of Appeal, and as therefore settling once and for all what was formerly uncertain.

Their material facts are shortly these. In the first, a workman named Smith sued his employers, Messrs. Charles Baker and Sons, for damages for injuries received by him while at work in their quarry. He had been

employed in the quarry for some months at different kinds of jobs. Two months before the accident, he, with two other men, was set to work with a hammer and drill, he handling the drill and they the hammer. On the day of the accident he was in this way employed in drilling a hole, and at the same time stones were being lifted from the cutting, which was seventeen or eighteen feet deep. It occasionally happened that the stones so lifted were jibbed over the place where Smith was working, and it did actually happen that one of these stones in the course of being lifted fell upon Smith and caused him serious injuries. Smith was accustomed, whenever he saw a stone being jibbed over him, to move out of the way, but, as he was engaged in drilling a hole, he did not see the particular stone that caused the injury, and was therefore unable to move in time. It was contended by his employers that as he was aware of the risk involved in his work, he must be taken to have consented to incur it. The House of Lords held that, though he was aware of the risk, it did not follow that he thereby voluntarily submitted himself to it; that mere knowledge was not the same as assent, and that a man who was *sciens* was not necessarily *volens*. It was thought that a workman might be perfectly well aware that he was incurring some risk, that he might call the attention of his employers to it, and that, although the element of risk was not removed, he might yet continue to incur it rather than throw up his employment. It would be a hard case to say that a workman in this position had incurred the risk voluntarily. He might continue to work most unwillingly, dreading the possibility of injury, but dreading still more the loss of work and the miseries entailed by it.

Until the present case was decided an opposite view had been held by some judges, and might perhaps have eventually become settled law. Fortunately now this is not the case. Workmen are so liable to accidents in the course of their work, that every one will welcome a decision which places them in a better position to meet the inevitable risks of their calling.

In the second case a man named Johnson was employed by Messrs. Higgs and Hill, a firm of builders who had entered into a contract with the Workmen's Dwellings Association to erect a block of buildings. There was also an independent contract with Messrs. W. H. Lindsay and Co. to supply fireproof flats and floors in the buildings. Johnson and Messrs. Lindsay's men were engaged in their several employments at the same time, and through the latter's negligence Johnson received injuries for which he claimed damages from Messrs. Lindsay. They resisted the claim on the ground that their own workmen and Johnson were engaged in a common employment. It was perfectly true that they were engaged in the common employment of erecting the buildings. The importance of the case lies in this—that it has been decided that this is not enough to form a good defence, but that it is necessary to show that the injured and those who did the injury should have one common master. Now in the present case Johnson was the servant of Messrs. Higgs and Hill, and those who did the injury were servants of Messrs. Lindsay and Co., so that in no sense had they a common master. Johnson was really in the position of an absolute stranger to Messrs. Lindsay and Co., and it seems only reasonable that he should have the full rights of a stranger. In several previous cases an opposite view had prevailed, so that by the present decision the working classes generally have gained a solid addition to the legal rights which they already enjoy. This is an event upon which they may well be congratulated.

The second class of cases to which we refer have a most important bearing upon the status and rights of Trade-Unions, and they therefore deserve the fullest consideration. They are two in number, and their material facts, which are very instructive, may be stated shortly as follows.

In the first, a workman named Lawson was charged with unlawfully intimidating a fellow-workman named Gibson. Both men were employed as fitters in the same shipbuilding yard. They belonged however to different Trade-Unions, Lawson being a member of the Amalgamated Society, and Gibson a member of the National Society. On December 3rd, 1890, a meeting of the Amalgamated Society was held, at which it was resolved that the members of that Society would strike unless Gibson would leave his Society and join them. Lawson communicated this decision to the foreman of the Shipbuilding Company in which they were employed, and the foreman in his turn communicated it to Gibson. After an interview between Gibson and Lawson, the former was finally informed that the Amalgamated Society were determined to carry their resolution into effect, and he was given until December 6th to make up his mind. Gibson was however not to be browbeaten in this fashion, and in the event he remained true to his own Society. But here a very untoward thing happened. The Shipbuilding Company, who employed a number of men belonging to the Amalgamated Society, in order to avoid a strike dismissed Gibson from their yard. It should be said in justice to the Amalgamated Society that no violence or threats of violence were used to Gibson's person or property; but Gibson was afraid, and justly so, that, in consequence of what Lawson had told him, he would lose his employment, and would find no more in any place where the Amalgamated Society was stronger than his own.

In the second case the material facts are these. A secretary of a

Trade-Union named Curran, and the secretaries of two other Trade-Unions were charged with unlawfully intimidating a Plymouth ship-owner named Treleavan. The three secretaries told Mr. Treleavan that, if he continued to employ non-Union men, they would call off from work all the members of their respective Unions in his service. Mr. Treleavan very naturally resented this dictation, and refused to comply with their demands. Thereupon the secretaries carried out their threat, and the Union men in obedience to the call struck work. It should be added that the secretaries did not desire or intend that any violence should be used, or that any personal injury should be done to Mr. Treleavan, nor were their acts or words calculated directly to cause any such violence or injury.

Now in both of these cases it was held that there had been no intimidation, and that therefore the accused must be acquitted. These decisions unquestionably constitute an important victory for the Trade-Unionists; unquestionably also they suggest much matter for reflection. First, they mark the consummation of a very instructive period of legal history, a history which affords a curious example of the manner in which men shift their point of view on questions of morals and politics. What was recently held wrong is now deemed right, and the paradoxes of yesterday become the truisms of to-day. The light in which strikes have been regarded is an example of this. Within the early years of the present century strikes were considered not merely impolitic (as indeed they may well be now), but criminal. We find the judges laying down *dicta* of this sort, "Each may insist on raising his wages, if he can, but if several meet for the same purpose, it is illegal, and the parties may be indicted for conspiracy;" or again, "Combinations, whether on the part of workmen to increase or of the masters to lower wages, are equally illegal." Chief

Justice Sir William Earle spoke of strikes "as the power of evil in remorseless activity, destroying those relations between employers and employed on which comfort and peace depend, bringing guilt and misery on the workmen and ruin on their employers." With much of this statement every one will cordially agree. There can be no doubt at least about the misery and ruin. How the idea arose that to strike was criminal it is not easy to discover. There were indeed some ancient statutes which made it unlawful for workmen to combine for the purpose of raising wages or regulating the hours of work. One at least was passed in the reign of Edward VI. These statutes, and the notion that strikes were contrary to public policy as being a restraint of trade, were probably the foundation of the theory that strikes were illegal. However that may be, public opinion began to make its power felt in favour of a relaxation of a law which came to be regarded as unsatisfactory and unfair. The first step in this direction was taken in 1826. Strikes were then for the first time made legal, but the value of the concession was much limited owing to the comprehensive manner in which a number of acts were prohibited. Strikes were indeed made legal, but so timorous were our legislators that they took care to render it almost impossible that the strikes could be conducted under other than illegal conditions. It became apparent that the prohibitions contained in this statute were too stringent, and so in 1871 a new statute was passed by which intimidation was practically restricted to mean threats of personal violence. Finally in 1875 this statute also was repealed, and the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act substituted for it. This act likewise prohibited intimidation, but it left the meaning of the word entirely undefined, and in the two cases given above the judges being called upon to say what intimi-



dation meant, declared its meaning to be restricted to threats of personal violence. Here then we have before us an interesting picture of the gradual modification of public opinion. It may be even cited in illustration of the theory that there is no absolute standard in morals, but that they are merely relative to time and place. For just as a certain sect in Arabia is said to hold tobacco-smoking to be worse than murder, so in England at the beginning of this present century to strike was held criminal, while wholesale political bribery was held, if not laudable, at least blameless. But gradually public opinion changed. First, strikes were illegal; then they were made legal, but only in a niggardly spirit; lastly, their legality was fully and generously conceded, and now men may strike as much as they please so long as they abstain from threats of personal violence. The change is immense. The Papacy is not usually regarded as other than a somewhat laggard institution. But even Leo XIII., in his recent Encyclical on the Condition of Labour, is emphatic in his encouragement of Workmen's Associations, and implicitly recognizes their right to strike.

All this is well so far. Trade-Unions, when conducted in accordance with their first principles, may be harmless and even necessary institutions. We hardly in these days require to be reminded that union is strength by Scriptural authority, such as the passages quoted in the Papal Encyclical: "Woe to him that is alone, for when he falleth he hath none to help him;" "A brother that is helped by his brother is like a strong city," and so forth. Nor will it be denied that strikes should be up to a certain point legal. Occasions may doubtless arise when workmen can only obtain justice by striking, for, again to use the words of the Encyclical, "there is a dictate of nature more imperious and more ancient than any bargain between man and man, that the remuneration must be enough to support

the wage-earner in reasonable and frugal comfort. If through necessity, or fear of a worse evil, the workman accepts harder conditions because an employer or contractor will give him no better, he is the victim of force or injustice." But these decisions go to much greater lengths than merely reinforcing the liberty of working men to strike. Let us consider what the facts of these two cases were. In the first, the action of the Amalgamated Society resulted in a very serious interference with Gibson's freedom of action. He was, in fact, placed on the horns of a dilemma. Either he was to be compelled to leave his own Society and join another against his will, or he was to be subjected to the risk of losing his employment. He preferred to incur the risk, and in the event did actually lose his employment. And all this although he was a good citizen, willing and able to work and serve his employers. If this be not tyranny, it is a very perfect imitation of it. It is simply monstrous that a man should not be able to work for any one he pleases, or to belong to any Society he pleases, without being subjected to pressure of this sort. Then again the Shipbuilding Company was placed in a position in which no employers of labour ever should be placed. Either it had to dismiss Gibson for no fault of his, which was an act of injustice, or it had to submit to a strike of its own men with all its disastrous consequences. It preferred the former course, and sacrificed Gibson to its own interests. The facts of the second case are as bad as, if not worse than, the first. In this case Mr. Treleavan, the employer, was placed in the dilemma of having to submit to a strike, or to dismiss the non-Union men in his employ for no fault of their own. He declined to do the latter, an act of gross injustice, and in consequence had to encounter a strike. A workman surely ought to be at liberty to decide for himself whether he will join any Trade-Union at all, without being submitted to almost irresistible pressure

to compel him to join. The Trade-Union says to him almost in so many words, "Join us or starve." Leo XIII. in his Encyclical has declared that there is a good deal of evidence which goes to prove that many workmen's Societies "are managed on principles far from compatible with Christianity and the public well-being; and that they do their best to get into their hands the whole field of labour and to force workmen either to join them or starve." If Leo XIII. wants any more evidence of this, he has it in these two cases ready to his hand. And herein lies their great importance, for by them the seal and sanction of the law is given to acts which do really seem to conflict with Christianity and the public weal. This new Apocalypse of tyranny that is presented to us is appalling. For it should be noted that the two cases we have described are only examples which have happened to come before the Courts. They are only samples of the bulk, and what that bulk is we may infer from the case of Michael Crawley, the facts of which have been given in a letter to *The Standard* from Mr. John Sennett. Crawley was a Thames lighterman, who, when the Lightermen's Union resolved to take part in the great dock strike, refused to join in that strike. He entered the service of Messrs. A. and P. Keen, of Bermondsey, and remained with them for a considerable period. When the strike was over, the Lightermen's Union had the effrontery to impose a fine of five pounds upon him as a punishment for remaining at work. This he flatly refused to pay, and, as Messrs. Keen very properly declined to dismiss him, it was decided to boycott him. Never was a resolution carried out with more unflagging persistency or inexorable cruelty. The lightermen would neither speak with him nor work with him. He was an outcast, a pariah, a social leper. Every obstacle was placed in his way. He did not even escape violence. Even when he was compelled by inability to obtain work at his usual

calling to look for it elsewhere, his persecution did not cease. He was hounded down wherever he went and whatever he did. The result was that he was driven to great straits, almost to starvation and suicide. And all for what? Because he had the presumption to differ from his fellow-workmen on the opportuneness of a strike! Tyranny could not well go much further.

Trade-Unions are above all Societies bound to refrain from any infraction of the liberty of others. It is to the sacred principle of liberty that they owe their present position. It was strenuously argued by their supporters that liberty demanded the abolition of the Combination Laws, and it was further claimed that Trade-Unionism, though unrestrained, would never curtail the freedom of any man. The wheel of Fortune has spun round, and Trade-Unionism now "stands upon the top of golden hours." It has triumphed; but can it be said to have remained true to the promises made for it? Assuredly it cannot. It was said that they would only put moral pressure or suasion upon workmen who differed from them. But in the cases described the pressure might certainly be described as immoral. In Gibson's case the Amalgamated Society had not even the excuse so often put forward by Trade-Unions for boycotting those who refuse to join in a strike. It is said that those men who take the place of strikers, and who are called "blacklegs," are willing enough to reap, and do reap, the advantages of Trade-Unionism. They gain the benefit of a rise in wages, but they shirk the burden and heat of the day, and step in to enjoy the fruits of the labour of others. There may possibly be some justice in this contention, but it has no application to Gibson's case. He actually belonged to a Trade-Union, and did not step in to take the place of a striker; it was simply the tyranny of the Amalgamated Society which would brook no rival. Then, again, both in this case and the Ply-

mouth case, the Trade-Unions seemed not to care one jot how much they injured the employers, so long as they gained their end. The shipbuilding company and Mr. Treleavan had nothing whatever to do with the Trade-Unions' grievances ; and yet the Trade-Unions did not hesitate either to compel them to acts of injustice or to submit them to heavy loss. There used to be a maxim that you should so use your own as not to injure any one else. This would seem to have been abrogated, so far as Trade-Unions are concerned. Then what of the morality of the treatment meted out to Crawley ? There might have been some foundation of justice in refusing to work with him during the continuance of the strike. But when the strike was over, even when he had ceased to work as a lighterman, he was persistently persecuted. Such treatment was nothing but revenge as senseless as it was cruel. But the worst of all this is, that, since the decisions in the Newcastle and Plymouth cases, it is legalized by the law of the land. It is not intimidation, in the sense of threats of violence, and that is enough. Even in Crawley's case, it was only actual assault that was illegal. But tyranny may be not the less odious and oppressive because indirect and more or less veiled. And torture may be moral as well as physical ; the enforced loss of work, and the resulting pinch of poverty, may be even harder to bear than actual violence. The pangs of starvation may be a more exquisite pain than that caused by a blow or a kick. But, according to the present state of the law, you may threaten the former, though not the latter. It is noteworthy that these decisions are approved by such a sturdy supporter of the true principles of Trade-Unionism as Mr. Howell, M.P. He declares that if these cases had been decided differently it would have rendered the Act of 1875 "a trap for the unwary," and that such an interpretation would have been "a class declaration of a

class law." But the law would have been the same for everybody, for employers and employed alike, so that it is difficult to see the validity of his contention. What we may expect to be the view of the more fiery advocates of what is called the new Trade-Unionism may be inferred from the fact that, at the Trade-Union Congress of 1890, the Parliamentary Committee was instructed to secure the removal even of the existing restrictions on intimidation. Fortunately this enormity has not been again perpetrated at the last Congress.

It is unhappily too true that for the most part the only bond that now exists between master and servant is the bond of money. Even Shakespeare lamented the disappearance of

The constant service of the antique world,  
When service sweat for duty, not for meed.

But that is all the more reason why the relations of master and servant, and, it may be added, of servant and servant, should be put on a proper legal footing. It is bad that Trade-Unionists should terrorize non-Unionists : it is worse that one Trade-Union should try to trample on the members of another Trade-Union ; but it is worse still that employers should be made to suffer loss in consequence. This state of things is intolerable, and not to be borne ; it must be mended or ended. And this can be easily done. For even so late as the year 1867 it was held by the judges that a strike was illegal, at least in so far as its object was to coerce a workman in respect of the freedom of his industry or an employer in respect of the management of his business. This doctrine was subsequently exploded. But if it was embodied in a short statute it would go a long way towards removing an evil which tends to grow, now that the newer Trade-Unionists seem inclined to break from those first principles which have been their best support, and which can be their only excuse.

C. B. ROYLANCE KENT.

## THE FLOWER OF FORGIVENESS.

"SURELY this is very rare?" I remarked, as looking through a herbarium of Himalayan plants belonging to a friend of mine I came upon a small anemone which, contrary to the custom of that most delicate of flowers, had preserved its colour in all its first freshness. Indeed the scarlet petals, each bearing a distinct heartshaped blotch of white in the centre, could scarcely have glowed more brilliantly in life than they did in death.

"Very rare," returned the owner after a pause; "I have reason to believe it unique,—so far as collections go at any rate."

"I see you have called it *Remissionensis*. What induced you to give it such an odd name?"

He smiled. "Dog-Latin, I acknowledge. As for the reason,—can you not guess?"

"Well," I replied, looking closer at the white and red flowers, "I have not your vivid imagination, but I presume it was in allusion to sins as scarlet, and hearts white as wool. Ah! it was found, I see, near the Cave of Amarnâth; that accounts for the connection of ideas."

"No doubt," he said quietly, "that accounts for the connection in a measure; not entirely. The fact is, a very odd story,—the oddest story I ever came into personally—is connected with that flower. You remember Taylor, surgeon of the 101st, who died of pyæmia contracted in some of his cholera experiments? Well, just after I joined, we chummed together in Cashmere, where he was making the herbarium at which you have been looking. He was a most charming companion for a youngster eager to understand something of a new life, for, without exception, he knew more of native thought and feeling than any

other man I ever met. He had a sort of intuition about it; yet at the same time he was curiously unsympathetic, and seemed to look on it merely as a field for research, and nothing more. He used to talk to every man he met on the road, and in this way managed to acquire an extraordinary amount of information utterly undreamed of by most Englishmen. For instance, his first acquaintance with the existence of this anemone grew out of a chance conversation with an old ruffian besmeared with filth from head to foot, and it was his consequent desire to add the rarity to his collection, joined to my fancy for seeing a real pilgrimage, which brought us to Islamabad about the end of July, about the time, that is to say, of the annual festival.

"The sacred spring where the pilgrimage is inaugurated by a solemn feeding of the holy fish is some way from the town, so we pitched our tents under a plane tree close to the temples, in order to see the whole show. And a queer show it was. Brummagem umbrellas stuck like mushrooms over green stretches of grass, and giving shelter to a motley crew; *jogis*, or wandering mendicants, meditating on the mystic word Om and thereafter lighting sacred fires with Swedish *tändstickors*; Government clerks, bereft of raiment, forgetting reports and averages in a return to primitive humanity. Taylor never tired of pointing out these strange contrasts, and over his evening pipe read me many a long lecture on putting new wine into old bottles. For myself it interested me immensely. I liked to think of the young men and maidens, the weary workers and the hoary old sinners, all journeying in faith, hope, and charity (or the

want of it) to the Cave of Amar-nâth in order to get the Great Ledger of Life settled up to date, and so to return scot free to the world, the flesh, and the devil in order to begin the old round all over again. I liked to think that crime sufficient to drag half Hindostan to the nethermost pit had been made over to those white gypsum cliffs, and that still, summer after summer, the wind flowers sprang from the crannies, and the forget-me-nots with their message of warning came to carpet the way for those eager feet seeking the impossible. I liked to see all the strange perversities and pieties displayed by the *jogis* and *gosains*. It was from one of the latter, a horrid old ruffian (so ridiculously like *Il Re Galant 'uomo* that we nicknamed him Victor Emanuel on the spot), that Taylor had first heard of the Flower of Forgiveness as the man styled it. He and the Doctor grew quite hot over the possible remission of sins; but the subsequent gift of one rupee sterling sent him away asseverating that none could filch from him the first-fruits of pilgrimage,—namely the opportunity of meeting a Protector of the Poor so virtuous, so generous, so full of the hoarded wisdom of ages. I recognised the old humbug in the crowd as we made our way to a sort of latticed gallery belonging to the Maharajah's guest-house, which gave on the tank where the fish are fed. He salaamed profoundly, and with a grin expressed his delight that, after all, the great Doctor *sahib* should be seeking forgiveness.

"‘I seek the flower only, Pious One?’ replied Taylor with a shrug of the shoulders.

"‘Perhaps ’tis the same thing,’ retorted Victor Emanuel with another salaam.

"The square tank was edged by humanity in the white and saffron robes of pilgrimage. Brimming up to the stone step worn smooth by generations of sinners, the waters of the spring lapped lazily, stirred by the myriads of small fish which in their

eagerness for the coming feast flashed hither and thither like meteors, to gather in radiating stars round the least speck on the surface, sometimes in their haste rising in scaly mounds above the water. The blare of a conch, and a clanging of discordant bells made all eyes turn to the platform in front of the temple, where the attendant Brahmans stood with high-heaped baskets of grain awaiting the sacrificial words about to be spoken by an old man, who, with one foot on the bank, spread his arms skywards. An old man of insignificant height, but with an indescribable dignity on which I remarked to my companion.

"‘It is indescribable,’ he assented, ‘because it is compounded of factors not only wide as the poles asunder from you or me, but also from each other. Pride of twice-born trebly-distilled ancestry bringing a conviction of inherited worthiness; pride in hardly-acquired devotion giving birth to a sense of personal frailty. *That* is the Brahman whom we lump into a third-class railway carriage with the ruck of humanity, and then wonder,—hush! he is going to begin.’

"‘Thou art Light! Thou art Immortal Life!’ The voice with a tremor of emotion in it pierced the stillness for a second before it was shattered by a hoarse strident cry,—‘Silence!’

"Taylor leaned forward, suddenly interested. ‘You’re in luck,’ he whispered. ‘I believe there is going to be a row of some sort.’

"Once more the cry rose harsher than before: ‘Silence, Sukya! Thou art impure.’

"A stir in the crowd, and a visible straightening of the old man’s back were the only results.

"‘Thou art the Holiest Sacrifice! We adore Thee, adorable Sun!’

"‘Silence!’

"This time the interruption took shape in a *jogi*, who, forcing his way through the dense ranks, emerged on the platform to stand pointing with denunciatory finger at the old Brah-



man. Naked, save for the cable of grass round his loins and the smearing of white ashes, with hair lime-bleached and plaited with hemp into a sort of *chignon*, no more ghastly figure could be conceived. The crowd, however, hailed him with evident respect, while a murmur of 'Gopi! 'tis Gopi the *bikshu* [religious beggar]' passed from mouth to mouth. This reception seemed to rouse the old man's wrath, for after one scornful glance at the newcomer he was about to continue his invocation to the sun, when the *jogi* striding forward flourished his mendicant's staff so close to the other's face that he perforce fell back.

"Before the crowd had grasped the deadly earnest of the scene, a lad of about sixteen, clad in the black antelope skin which marks a religious disciple, had leaped quivering with rage between the old man and his assailant.

"'By George,' muttered Taylor, 'what a splendid young fellow!'

"He was indeed. Extraordinarily fair, even for the fairest race in India, he might have served as model for a young Perseus as he stood there, the antelope skin falling from his right shoulder leaving the sacred cord of the Brahman visible on his left, while his smooth round limbs showed in all their naked, vigorous young beauty.

"'Stand off, Amra! who bade thee interfere?' cried the old man sternly. The bond between them was manifest by the alacrity with which the boy obeyed the command, for to the spiritual master implicit obedience is due. At the same moment the chief priest of the shrine, alarmed at an incident which might interfere with the expected almsgiving, hurried forward. Luckily the crowd kept the silence which characterises gregarious humanity in the East, so we could follow what was said.

"'Wilt remove yonder drunken fanatic, or shall the worship of the Shining Ones be profaned?' asked the old Brahman savagely; and at a sign

from their chief the attendants stepped forward.

"But the *jogi* facing the crowd appealed direct to that fear of defilement which haunts the Hindoo's heart. 'Impure! Impure! Touch him not! Hear him not! Look not on him!' The vast concourse swayed and stirred, as with a confident air the *jogi* turned to the chief priest. 'These twelve years ago, O! *mohunt-ji*<sup>1</sup> thou knowest Gopi—Gopi the *bikshu*! since for twelve years I have been led hither by the Spirit, seeking speech, and finding silence! But now speech is given by the same Spirit. That man, Sukya, anchorite of Setanagar, is unclean, false to his race, to his vows, to the Shining Ones! I, Gopi the *bikshu*, will prove it.'

"Once again a murmur rose like the wind presaging a storm, and as the crowd surged closer to the temple a young girl in the saffron drapery of a pilgrim, took advantage of the movement to make her way to the platform with the evident intention of pressing to the old man's side; but she was arrested by the young Perseus, who with firm hands clasping hers, whispered something in her ear. She smiled up at him, and so they stood hand in hand, eager but confident, as the Brahman's voice clear with certainty dominated the confusion.

"'Ay! Prove it! Prove that I, Sukya, taught of the great Swami, twice-born Brahman, faithful disciple, blameless householder, and pious anchorite in due turn as the faith demands, have failed once in the law without repentance and atonement! Lo! I swear by the Shining Ones that I stand before ye to-day body and soul holy to the uttermost.'

"'God gie us a gude conceit o' oursels,' muttered Taylor.

"The remark jarred on me painfully, for the spiritual exaltation in the man's face had nothing personal in it, nothing more selfish than the rapt confidence which glorified the young disciple's whole bearing as he gazed or

<sup>1</sup> Head of a religious community.

his master with the sort of blind adoration one sees in the eyes of a dog.

“‘Think! I am Sukya!’ went on the high-pitched voice. ‘Would Sukya come between his brethren and the Shining Ones? I, chosen for the oblation by reason of virtue and learning; I, Sukya, journeying to Holy Amar-nâth not for my own sake,—for I fear no judgment—but for the sake of the disciple, yonder boy Amra, betrothed to the daughter of my daughter, and vowed to the pilgrimage from birth.’

“A yell of crackling laughter came from the *jogi* as he leapt to the bastion of the bathing-place, and so, raised within sight of all, struck an attitude of indignant appeal. ‘When was an outcast vowed to pilgrimage? And by my *jogi*’s vow I swear the boy Amra, disciple of Sukya, to be an outcast. A Sudra of Sudras! seeing that his mother, being twice-born, defiled her race with scum from beyond the seas.’

“‘By George!’ muttered Taylor again, ‘this is getting lively—for the scum.’

“‘Perhaps the Presence is becoming tired of this vulgar scene,’ suggested an obsequious *chuprassi*, who had been devoted to our service by order of the Cashmere officials. But the Presences were deeply interested; for all that I should not care to witness such a sight again. The attention of the crowd, centred a moment before on the *jogi*, was turned now on the boy, who stood absolutely alone; for the girl, moved by the unreasoning habit of race, had dropped his hand at the first word and crept to her grandfather’s side. I can see that young face still, awful in its terror, piteous in its entreaty.

“‘Thou liest, Gopi!’ cried the Brahman gasping with passion; and at the words a gleam of hope crept to those hunted eyes. ‘Prove it, I say; for I appeal to the Shining Ones whom I have served.’

“‘I accept the challenge,’ yelled the *jogi* with frantic gestures, while a perfect roar of assent, cries of devotion,

and prayers for guidance, rose from the crowd.

“Taylor looked round at me quickly. ‘You are in luck. There is going to be a miracle. I saw that Gopi at Hurdwâr once; he is a rare hand at them.’ He must have understood my resentment at being thus recalled to the nineteenth century, for he added half to himself, ‘’Tis tragedy for all that,—to the boy.’

“An appeal for silence enabled us to hear that both parties had agreed to refer the question of birth to the sacred cord, with which every male of the three twice-born castes is invested. If the strands were of the pure cotton ordained by ritual to the Brahman, the boy should be held of pure blood; but the admixture of anything pointing to the despised Sudra would make him *anathema maranatha*, and render his master impure and therefore unfit to lead the devotions of others.

“I cannot attempt to describe the scene which followed; for even now, the confusion inseparable from finding yourself in surroundings which require explanation before they can fall into their appointed place in the picture, prevents me from remembering anything in detail,—anything but a surging sea of saffron and white, a babel of wild cries, ‘*Hurri! Gunga-ji! Dhurm! Dhurm!*’ (Hollo! Ganges! the Faith! the Faith!) Then suddenly a roar,—‘Gopi! a miracle! a miracle! Praise be to the Shining Ones!’

“It seemed but a moment ere the enthusiastic crowd had swept the *jogi* from his pedestal, and, crowned with jasmin chaplets, he was being borne high on men’s shoulders to make a round of the various temples; while the keepers of the shrine swelled the tumult judiciously by cries of ‘Oblations! offerings! The Shining Ones are present to-day!’

“In my excitement at the scene itself I had forgotten its cause, and was regretting the all too sudden ending of the spectacle, when Taylor touched me on the arm. ‘The tragedy is about to begin! Look!’

"Following his eyes I saw, indeed, tragedy enough to make me forget what had gone before; yet I knew well that I did not, could not, fathom its depth or measure its breadth. Still, in a dim way I realised that the boy, standing as if turned to stone, had passed in those few moments from life as surely as if a physical death had struck him down; that he might indeed have been less forlorn had such been the case, since some one for their own sakes might then have given him six feet of earth. And now, even a cup of water, that last refuge of cold charity, was denied to him for ever, save from hands whose touch was to his Brahmanised soul worse than death. For him there was no future. For the old man who, burdened by the weeping girl, stood opposite him, there was no past. Nothing but a hell of defilement; of daily, hourly impurity for twelve long years. The thought was damnation.

"Come, Premi! Come!" he muttered, turning suddenly to leave the platform. "This is no place for us now. Quick! we must cleanse ourselves from deadly sin,—from deadly, deadly sin."

"They had reached the steps leading down to the tank when the boy, with a sob like that of a wounded animal, flung himself in agonised entreaty at his master's feet. 'Oh, cleanse me, even me also, Oh my father!'

"The old man shrank back instinctively; yet there was no anger, only a merciless decision in his face. 'Ask not the impossible! Thou art not alone impure; thou art uncleansable from birth,—yea! for ever and ever. Come, Premi, come, my child.'

"I shall never forget the cry which echoed over the water, startling the pigeons from their evening rest amid the encircling trees. 'Uncleansable for ever and ever!' Then in wild appeal from earth to heaven he threw his arms skyward. 'Oh, Shining Ones! say I am the same Amra the twice-born, Amra, thy servant!'

"Peace! blasphemer!" interrupted

the Brahman sternly. 'There are no Shining Ones for such as thou. Go! lest they strike thee dead in wrath.'

"A momentary glimpse of a young face distraught by despair, of an old one firm in repudiation, and the platform lay empty of the passions which had played their parts on it as on a stage. Only from the distance came the discordant triumph of the *jogi's* procession.

"I besieged Taylor's superior knowledge by vain questions, to most of which he shook his head. 'How can I tell?' he said somewhat fretfully. 'The cord was manipulated in some way of course. For all that, there may be truth in Gopi's story. There is generally the devil to pay if a Brahmani goes wrong, and she may have tried to save the boy's life by getting rid of him. If you want to know more, I'll send for Victor Emanuel. Five rupees will fetch some slight fraction of truth from the bottom of his well, and that as a rule is all we aliens can expect in these incidents.'

"So the old ruffian came and sate ostentatiously far from our contaminating influences in the attitude of a bronze Buddha, his moustaches curled to his eyebrows, his large lips wreathed in solemn smiles. 'It was a truly divine miracle,' he said, blandly. 'Gopi, the *bikshu*, never makes mistakes and performs neatly. Did the Presence observe how neatly? Within the cotton marking the Brahman came the hempen thread of the Kshatriya, inside again the woollen strand of the Vaisya; all three twice-born. But last of all, a strip of cow-skin defiling the whole.'

"Why cow-skin?' I asked in my ignorance. 'I always thought you held a cow sacred.'

"Victor Emanuel beamed approval. 'The little Presence is young but intelligent. He will doubtless learn much if he questions the right people judiciously. He will grow wise like the big Presence, who knows nearly as much as we know about some things,—but not all! The cow is sacred,



so the skin telling of the misfortune of the cow is *anathema*. Yea, 'twas a divine miracle. The money of the pious will flow to make the holy fat ; at least that is what the Doctor *sahib* is thinking.'

" 'Don't set up for occult power on the strength of guessing palpable truths,' replied Taylor ; 'that sort of thing does not amuse me ; but the little *sahib* wants to know how much truth there was in Gopi's story.'

" 'Gopi knows,' retorted our friend with a grin. 'The Brahman saith the boy was gifted to him by a pious woman after the custom of thanksgiving. Gone five years old, wearing the sacred thread, versed in simple lore, intelligent, well-formed, as the ritual demands. Gopi saith the mother, his wife, was a bad walker even to the length of public bazaars. Her people sought her for years but she escaped them in big towns, and ere they found her she had gained safety for this boy by palming him off on Sukya. 'Twas easy for her, being a Brahmani. Of course they made her speak somewhat ere she fulfilled her life, but not the name of the anchorite she deceived. So Gopi, knowing from the mother's babbling of this mongrel's blasphemous name, and the vow of pilgrimage for the expiation of sins, hath come hither, led by the Spirit, every year. It is a tale of great virtue and edification.'

" 'But the boy ! the wretched boy ?' I asked eagerly. Taylor raised his eyebrows and watched my reception of the *jogi's* answer with a half pitying smile.

" 'Perhaps he will die ; perhaps not. What does it matter ? One born of such parents is dead to virtue from the beginning, and life without virtue is not life.'

" 'He might try Amar-nâth and the remission of sins you believe in so firmly,' remarked Taylor with another look at me.

" Victor Emanuel spat freely. 'There is no Amar-nâth for such as he, and the Presence knows that as

well as I do. No remission at all, even if he found the flower of forgiveness as the Doctor *sahib* hopes to do.'

" 'Upon my soul,' retorted Taylor impatiently, 'I believe the existence of the one is about as credible as the other. I shall have to swallow both if I chance upon either.'

" 'That may be ; but not for the boy Amra. He will die and be damned in due course.'

" That seemed to settle the question for others, but I was haunted by the boy's look when he heard the words, 'Thou art uncleansable for ever and ever.'

" 'After all 'tis only a concentrated form of the feeling we all have at times,' remarked Taylor drily ; 'even I should like to do away with a portion of my past. Besides all religions claim more or less a monopoly of repentance. They are no worse here than at home.'

" We journeyed slowly to Amar-nâth, watching the pilgrims pass us by on the road, but catching them up again each evening after long rambles over the hills in search of rare plants. It is three days' march by rights to Shisha Nag, or the Leaden Lake, where the pilgrimage begins in real earnest by the pilgrims, men, women, and children, divesting themselves of every stitch of raiment, and journeying stark naked through the snow and ice for two days ; coming back, of course, clothed with righteousness. But Taylor, becoming interested over fungi in the chestnut woods of Chandan-warra, we paused there to hunt up all sorts of deathly-looking growths due to disease and decay. I was not sorry ; for one pilgrim possessed by frantic haste to shift his sins to some scape-goat is very much like another pilgrim with the same desire ; besides I grew tired of Victor Emanuel, who felt the cold extremely and was in consequence seldom sober, and extremely loquacious. I thought I had never seen such a dreary place as Shisha Nag, though the sun shone brilliantly on its cliffs and glaciers. I think it

must have been the irresponsiveness of the lake itself which deadened its beauties, for the water, surcharged with gypsum, lay in pale green stretches refusing a single reflection of the hills which held it so carefully.

"The next march was awful; and in more than one place, half hidden by the flowers forcing their way through the snow, lay the corpses of pilgrims who had succumbed to the cold and the exposure.

"'Pneumonia in five out of six cases,' remarked Taylor casually. 'If it were not for the *charas* [concoction of hemp] they drink the mortality would be fearful. I wonder what Exeter Hall would say to getting drunk for purposes of devotion.'

"At Punjtârni we met the returning pilgrims; among others Victor, very sick and sorry for himself physically, but of intolerable moral strength. He told us, between the intervals of petitions for pills and potions, that the remaining fourteen miles to the Cave were unusually difficult, and had been singularly fatal that year. On hearing this Taylor, knowing my dislike to horrors, proposed taking a path across the hills instead of keeping to the orthodox route. Owing to scarcity of water and fuel the servants and tents could only go some five miles further along the ravine, so this suggestion would involve no change of plan. He added that there would also be a greater chance of finding 'that blessed anemone.' I don't think I ever saw so much drunkenness, or so much devotion, as I saw that evening at Punjtârni. It was hard indeed to tell where the one began and the other ended; for excitement, danger, and privation lent their aid to drugs, and a sense of relief to both. The very cliffs and glaciers resounded with enthusiasm, and I saw Sukya and Premi taking their part with the rest as if nothing had happened.

"Taylor and I started alone next morning. We were to make a long round in search of the Flower of Forgiveness and came back upon the Cave

towards afternoon. The path, if path it could be called, was fearful. Taylor however was untiring, and at the slightest hint of hope would strike off up the most break-neck places, leaving me to rejoin him as best I could. Yet not a trace did we find of the anemone. Taylor grew fretful, and when we reached the snow slope leading to the Cave, he declared it would be sheer waste of time for him to go up.

"'Get rid of your sins, if you want to, by all means,' he said; 'I've seen photographs of the place, and it's a wretched imposture even as a spectacle. You have only to keep up the snow for a mile and turn to the left. You'll find me somewhere about these cliffs on your return; and don't be long, for the going before us is difficult.' So I left him poking into every crack and cranny.

"I could scarcely make up my mind if I was impressed or disappointed with the Cave. Its extreme insignificance was, it is true, almost ludicrous. Save for a patch of red paint and a shockingly bad attempt at a stone image of Siva's bull, there was nothing to distinguish this hollow in the rock from a thousand similar ones all over the Himalayas. But this very insignificance gave mystery to the fact that hundreds of thousands of the conscience-stricken had found consolation here. '*What went ye out into the wilderness to see?*' As I stood for an instant at the entrance before retracing my steps, I could not but think that here was a wilderness indeed; a wilderness of treacherous snow and ice-bound rivers peaked and piled up tumultuously like frozen waves against the darkening sky. The memory of Taylor's warning not to be late made me try what seemed a shorter and easier path than the one by which I had come; but ere long the usual difficulties of short cuts cropped up, and I had eventually to limp back to the slope with a badly cut ankle which bled profusely despite my rough efforts at bandaging. The loss of blood was sufficient to make me feel quite sick and faint, so that it

startled me to come suddenly on Taylor sooner than I expected. He was half kneeling, half sitting on the snow; his coat was off and his face bent over something propped against his arm.

"‘It’s that boy,’ he said shortly as I came up. ‘I found him just after you left, lying here,—to rest he says. It seems he has been making his way to the Cave ever since that day, without bite or sup, by the hills,—God knows how—to avoid being turned back by the others. And now he is dying, and there’s an end of it.’

"‘The boy,—not Amra!’ I cried, bending in my turn.

"‘Sure enough on Taylor’s arm, with Taylor’s coat over his wasted body, lay the young disciple. His great luminous eyes looked out of a face whence even death could not drive the beauty, and his breath came in laboured gasps.

"‘Brandy! I have some here,’ I suggested in hot haste, moved to the idiotic suggestion by that horror of standing helpless which besets us all in presence of the Destroyer.

"‘Taylor looked at the boy with a grave smile and shook his head. ‘To begin with he wouldn’t touch it; besides he is past all that sort of thing. No one could help him now.’ He paused, shifting the weight a little on his arm.

"‘The Presence will grow tired holding me,’ gasped the young voice feebly. ‘If the *sahib* will put a stone under my head and cover me with some snow, I will be able to crawl on by and by when I am rested. For it is close,—quite close.’

"‘Very close,’ muttered the Doctor under his breath. Suddenly he looked up at me, saying in a half apologetic way, ‘I was wondering if you and I couldn’t get him up there,—to Amar-nâth I mean. Life has been hard on him; he deserves an easy death.’

"‘Of course we can,’ I cried in a rush of content at the suggestion, as I hobbled round to get to the other side and so help the lad to his legs.

"‘Hollo,’ asked Taylor with a quick professional glance. ‘What have you

done to your ankle? Sit down and let me overhaul it.’

"‘In vain I made light of it, in vain I appealed to him. He peremptorily forbade my stirring for another hour, asserting that I had injured a small artery and without caution might find difficulty in reaching the tents, as it would be impossible for him to help me much on the sort of ground over which we had to travel.

"‘But the boy, Taylor!—the boy!’ I pleaded. ‘It would be awful to leave him here.’

"‘Who said he was to be left?’ retorted the Doctor crossly. ‘I’m going to carry him up as soon as I’ve finished bandaging your leg. Don’t be in such a blessed hurry.’

"‘Carry him! You can’t do it up that slope, strong as you are, Taylor,—I know you can’t.’

"‘Can’t?’ he echoed as he stood up from his labours. ‘Look at him and say can’t again,—if you can.’

"I looked and saw that the boy, but half conscious, yet restored to the memory of his object by the touch of the snow on which Taylor had laid him while engaged in bandaging my foot, had raised himself painfully on his hands and knees and was struggling upwards, blindly, doggedly.

"‘Hang it all,’ continued the Doctor fiercely, ‘isn’t that sight enough to haunt a man if he doesn’t try? Besides I may find that precious flower,—who knows?’

"As he spoke he stooped with the gentleness not so much of sympathy, as of long practice in suffering, over the figure which, exhausted by its brief effort, already lay prostrate on the snow.

"‘What is—the Presence—going—to do?’ moaned Amra doubtfully as he felt the strong arms close round him.

"‘You and I are going to find the remission of sins together at Amar-nâth,’ replied the Presence with a bitter laugh.

"The boy’s head fell back on the Doctor’s shoulder as if accustomed to

the resting-place. 'Amar-nâth!' he murmured. 'Yes! I am Amar-nâth.'

"So I sate there helpless, and watched them up the slope. Every slip, every stumble, seemed as if it were my own. I clenched my hands and set my teeth as if I too had part in the supreme effort, and when the straining figure passed out of sight I hid my face and tried not to think. It was the longest hour I ever spent before Taylor's voice holloing from the cliff above roused me to the certainty of success.

" 'And the boy?' I asked eagerly.

" 'Dead by this time I expect,' replied the Doctor shortly. 'Come on, —there's a good fellow—we haven't a moment to lose. I must look again for the flower to-morrow.'

"But letters awaiting our return to camp recalled him to duty on account of cholera in the regiment; so there was an end of anemone hunting. The 101st suffered terribly, and Taylor was in consequence hotter than ever over experiments. The result you know."

"Yes, poor fellow! but the anemone? I don't understand how it came here."

My friend paused. "That is the odd thing. I was looking after the funeral and all that, for Taylor and I were great friends,—he left me that

herbarium in memory of our time in Cashmere—well, when I went over to the house about an hour before to see everything done properly, his bearer brought me one of those little flat straw baskets the natives use. It had been left during my absence, he said, by a young Brahman who assured him that it contained something which the great Doctor *sahib* had been very anxious to possess, and which was now sent by some one to whom he had been very kind.

" 'You told him the *sahib* was dead, I suppose?' I asked.

"This slave informed him that the master had gained freedom, but he replied it was no matter, as all his task was this. On opening the basket I found a gourd such as the disciples carry round for alms, and in it, planted among gypsum *débris*, was that anemone; or rather that is a part of it, for I put some in Taylor's coffin."

"Ah! I presume the *gosain*—Victor Emanuel I think you called him—sent the plant; he knew of the Doctor's desire?"

"Perhaps. The bearer said the Brahman was a very handsome boy; very fair, dressed in the usual black antelope skin of the disciple. It is a queer story anyhow,—is it not?"

## OFF THE AZORES.

To the geographers of the ancient world the Azores were unknown. From the number of Phœnician coins found in Corvo, one of the north-western group, it is believed that those bold sailors must have visited them, and possibly left a settlement there. But if the ancients knew them, they have left no record of their knowledge. The Canaries they knew, and called them the Fortunate Islands, pleasing themselves with the pretty fancy that there after death the shades of their great heroes dwelt, happy and careless in a land of eternal summer, as in some

—lucid interspace of world and world,  
Where never creeps a cloud, or moves a  
wind,  
Nor ever falls the least white star of snow,  
Nor ever lowest roll of thunder moans,  
Nor sound of human sorrow mounts to  
mar  
Their sacred everlasting calm.

But of the Azores there is no hint even till the twelfth century, when Edrisi, the famous Arabian traveller, made for Roger, King of Sicily, a mighty globe of silver, and placed these islands thereon. Yet even Edrisi knew no name for them, and in the work he wrote to explain his globe he gave them none. We believe the group of islands he visited in the western seas to have been the Azores because he mentions their exact number, nine, and because he writes of a species of sparrowhawk as being very common on them, and the name Azores signifies in the Portuguese tongue the Hawk Islands.

Not till three centuries later did they become really known to Europeans. In 1439 Joshua Van der Berg, a native of Bruges, on a voyage from Lisbon to the African coast, was driven down to them by stress of weather, and

carried the news back to the Portuguese court. Cabral, the future discoverer of Brazil, was forthwith dispatched to spy out the new land, and his report being favourable, the work of colonising began. Edrisi has written of these islands as showing traces of having once been the home of a considerable people, and still in his day inhabited; but the Portuguese colonists seem to have found no inhabitants but the sparrowhawks. Themselves clearly of volcanic growth, the Azores have always suffered sadly from intestine commotions; and very probably the people and the cities of whom the Arabian wrote had perished "so as by fire" long before the Fleming's visit; perhaps even the very islands Edrisi saw had gone down again into the great deep whence they came, and others had taken their place. Later travellers have recorded more than one such rising and setting. On December 10th, 1720, one John Robison, master of a small English trading-vessel, saw a fire break out of the sea off Terceira, and out of the fire an island, as duly reported in the thirty-second volume of the *Philosophical Transactions*. Again, in the present century, the captain of an English man-of-war was witness to a similar birth almost on the same spot, accompanied, like the former, with fire and smoke and a noise as of thunder and great guns. The captain, perhaps with some confused memories of Milton, gave to the island the name of Sabrina; but it did not bear its name long, being soon washed back into limbo by the angry waves. Then, a year or two later, a certain captain of dragoons, voyaging in search of health, beheld a similar phenomenon: "a most awful and tremendous explosion of smoke and flames," vomiting cinders and ashes, stones of an



immense size, and fish, "some nearly roasted, and others as if boiled." It will be remembered that when H.M.S. *Barham* was carrying Sir Walter Scott on that sad journey to the Mediterranean, she came to a similar birth some two days sail from Malta. Four months earlier Graham's Island had risen from the sea, and, as though waiting only for the Great Magician, after he had passed sank back into it.

In 1580 the Azores came under the power of Spain, and in the history of the next twenty years their name is frequent as the favourite battle-ground of the English and Spanish fleets. The partiality was, indeed, mainly on the side of the former, and for a good reason. These islands lay right in the track of all vessels sailing to and from that enchanted region known then to all men as the Spanish Main. On the highest peak of Terceira, whence in clear weather the sea could be scanned for leagues round, were raised two columns, and by them a man watched night and day. When he saw any sails approaching from the west, he set a flag upon the western column, one for each sail; if they came from the east a similar sign was set up on the eastern column. Hither in those days came up out of the mysterious western seas the great argosies laden with gold and silver and jewels, with silks and spices and rare woods, wrung at the cost of thousands of harmless lives and cruelties unspeakable from the fair lands which lie between the waters of the Caribbean Sea and the giant wall of the Andes. And hither, when England too began to turn her eyes to El Dorado, came the great war-galleons of Spain and Portugal to meet these precious cargoes and convoy them safe into Lisbon or Cadiz before those terrible English sea-wolves could get scent of the prize.

When English ships first touched at the Azores we have no certain record. About 1563 the Spaniards found five brigs from Bristol and Barnstaple loading wood there, clapped the crews into irons, and carried them and their

cargoes into Cadiz. But the islands may have been known to our sailors before this. The great impulse given to maritime activity by Henry VIII. which began with William Hawkins's voyages to Guinea and Brazil in 1530, had sent the English flag into many strange waters and on many strange errands. There is no use in mincing the matter; we were terrible water-thieves in those times. All was fish that came to our net; French, Spaniards, Dutch, our men had at them all, with a splendid disregard of the rights of property and international amities. To be sure the booty we took from our neighbours they in their turn had taken from the rightful owners, and with even less ceremony. There was no open war with Spain till 1588, but Elizabeth had a most convenient way of publicly deprecating the riotous acts of her subjects, when she found it convenient to do so, and roundly encouraging them in private. An unqueenly trick, perhaps, and apt to confuse the law of nations; yet mightily useful to her, and to England. These sea-roving ancestors of ours were, it should never be forgotten, the real founders of the English Empire. To talk of them only as rovers and buccaneers, which some dealers in history have affected to do, is not only grossly unfair to the memory of many great and good men, but shows also a most inadequate conception of the facts of the case and of the conditions and circumstances of the time. It is true enough that there were some among them who had no thought but to enrich themselves by plunder, and cared not how the plunder was got or whence. But the best of them had larger and nobler aims than this. They were fighting for their country and their religion, for in those days Englishmen were not ashamed to be fond and proud of both. Neither could exist, as Englishmen were determined they should exist, while Spain remained what she then was; and the power of Spain could be broken only on the sea—only by striking at the source of that vast golden stream she drew from

the mines of the New World to keep the Old in chains. While it suited their Queen's policy that the men who set themselves to this vital work should do so at their own risk, at their own risk they did it, and found, as we know well, good reason not to quarrel with the conditions. The most part of the famous deeds enshrined in the immortal pages of Hakluyt, which read almost like the exploits of the heroes of Greek myth or Northern saga, were done by private venture, helped sometimes by the purses of such men as Cecil and Walsingham, Essex and Leicester, or even of the Queen herself, but practically undertaken at the risk of private and not wealthy individuals. The labourer is worthy of his hire. They served their country nobly, and paid themselves for their service, not at their country's cost. In all their direct dealings with the Indians themselves, the rightful lords of all this treasure, they bore themselves—with the one black exception, let it be owned, of the Guinea slave-trade—justly and mercifully, in such striking contrast to the white men who had forerun them, that the name of Englishman grew to be as much loved on those coasts as the name of Spaniard to be hated. And indeed the cause they fought for was as much the cause of those poor persecuted creatures as their own. To fight the Spanish devils was as much their glory as their profit; as much their duty to humanity as their duty to their country. The English sailors, half mad with righteous fury at the awful tales they had heard and had but too good reason to believe, were as ready to lay their little cockboats alongside some great war-galleon, bristling with a triple tier of guns and crammed to the teeth with musketmen and archers, as to cut out a defenceless plate-ship from the harbours of Chili or Peru. But after the large spirit and eloquence in which Charles Kingsley and Mr. Froude have done those old heroes justice, they need no third defender.

The first Englishman whose exploits at the Azores have made a figure in

history was George Fenner, a well-known name in the sea-stories of the time. We have no particulars of him, where he was born, or when, or of what family. His name is first known in connection with these islands, but afterwards he became a man of mark. On the great day of the Armada he commanded the *Leicester*, one of the finest ships of the English van, and is especially noted by the old chronicler for his bravery in the most furious and bloody moment of the modern Salamis. He is described there as a man, like Aulus the Dictator, of many fights; and this fight off the Azores was the most famous of them.

He sailed from Plymouth on December 10th, 1566, with three ships, the *Castle of Comfort*, the *May Flower*, and the *George*, and a pinnace. Their tonnage is not given, but there is reason to believe that the largest of them was not of a hundred tons burden. Edward Fenner, George's brother, was captain of the *May Flower*, and Robert Curtis of the *George*; the Admiral, or General, as the senior officer was indiscriminately called, hoisted his flag on the *Castle of Comfort*. The Guinea coast was their goal, and their object was trade in such commodities as they could come by, including, probably, some of those black commodities William Hawkins first taught Englishmen to look for. After a short stay at Teneriffe, they made Cape Verde on January 19th, and here their troubles began. They found the negroes minded rather to fight than to trade; through no misconduct of their own, but in revenge, so they were told, for a raid made a short while before by an English slaver. There was some sharp and rather dangerous fighting, the negroes using arrows steeped in an uncurable poison. "If the arrow," we read, "enter within the skin and draw blood, and except the poison be presently sucked out, or the place where any man is hurt be forthwith cut away, he dieth within four days, and within three hours after they be hurt or pricked, where-

soever it be, although but at the little toe, yet it striketh up to the heart, and taketh away the stomach, and causeth the party marvellously to vomit, being able to brook neither meat nor drink." Incurable or not, four of Fenner's men died from the effects, and another was only saved by the amputation of his arm. At Buona Vista and Mayo they fared better, but at St. Jago narrowly escaped a snare set for them by some Portuguese men-of-war; and so, thinking those parts rather too hot for them, after a visit to Fuego, they bore away for the Azores. On April 18th they watered at Flores, and on May 8th dropped anchor off Terceira.

It was verily a case of the fire for the frying-pan. The morning after their arrival came in sight a Portuguese galliass of four hundred tons, with a crew of three hundred men and mounted with many guns, some throwing shot as large as a man's head. She was escorted by two caravels, each well armed and manned; and Fenner saw there was hot work in store for the *Castle of Comfort*. It was to be even hotter than he expected. The galliass was reinforced in the course of the day by fresh crews from the shore, and on the next morning by four great caravels more, or armadas as they were called, the word *armada* originally signifying any armed force. The enemy now mustered seven ships, of which three were larger than the Englishman, and one of them four times as large. Neither the *May Flower* nor the *George* could help their consort. Probably they were too small to have been of much service against such big game, though the *George* was able to give a very good account of herself in a brush with some of the caravels. But through the most part of the time the wind kept them out of the fight, as it did our Dutch allies on the great day of La Hogue, and George Fenner had to play his own game as best he could. He certainly contrived to play it pretty well. For three days the little English

ship kept her seven assailants at bay, having sometimes as many as three in hand at once. In the night they left her alone, but she had little time to spare for rest, "having as much as we could do to mend our ropes, and to strengthen our bulwarks, putting our trust in God, and resolving ourselves rather to die in our defence than to be taken by such wretches." On the third morning, the 11th of May, all the seven came down together on the little *Castle* to make an end of her. "Holloing and whooping" they came down, "making account either to board us or else to sink us: but although our company was but small, yet lest they should see us any whit dismayed, when they hollowed we hollowed also as fast as they, and waved to them to come and board us if they durst, but that they would not, seeing us still so courageous: and having given us that day four fights, at night they forsook us with shame, as they came to us at the first with pride." "Then," goes on the old chronicle, "we directed our course for our own country"; and so ended the first of those great sea-fights which were to make the name of the English sailor a name of might in all waters.

Twenty years later Raleigh, then on the flood-tide of his fortune and with all his hundred irons hot in the fire, despatched a couple of vessels to the Azores—the *Mary Sparke* of fifty tons, and the *Serpent* of thirty-five. John Evesham, gentleman, one of the company, tells the story of the voyage with a most serene simplicity of language. "Not greatly respecting whom we took, so that we might have enriched ourselves, which was the cause of this our travail," we "flew false colours, and thereby made some pretty pickings, including the governors of St. Michael and the Straits of Magellan." On their way home they fell in with one of the Spanish plate-fleets of twenty-four sail, escorted by two car-racks of twelve hundred and a thousand tons. Right into the midst of this goodly company dashed the Englishmen



with their prize in tow, and for two-and-thirty hours fought them right and left, as they cared to come on, with the utmost content and cheerfulness. But powder running short, and the big carracks proving rather too big, the *Mary Sparke* and the *Serpent* at last gave over, and, with their prize still safe, made good their way home into Plymouth, where they were received, as was fitting, with great honour, all the town and the countryside turning out to welcome them with firing of guns and music, "with shouts and clapping, and noise of weeping loud."

In 1592 Raleigh picked up a finer prize still in these waters, and but for the misadventure with the fair Throckmorton, would have picked it up with his own hands. He had indeed already sailed, but was recalled by the Queen, his fleet going on under charge of Frobisher and Sir John Burrough. The former had orders to cruise off the Spanish coast; the latter was sent to the Azores. Both were successful. Frobisher took, off St. Lucas, a great Biscayan of six hundred tons, laden with iron-work worth several thousand pounds. But the great prize fell to his colleague, the *Madre de Dios* of sixteen hundred tons, with a cargo valued at one hundred and fifty thousand pounds, precious stones, ivory and ebony, rare spices and drugs, porcelain ware, Turkey carpets, and embroideries, silks, cloths, linens, and calicoes, the largest and richest prize ever brought into England, richer even and larger than the *St. Philip*, the great Portuguese carrack taken by Drake off the same islands five years before.

But the Azores were not always destined to bring luck to Raleigh. His next venture there was in 1597, when a great fleet was sent out under the command of Essex, with Raleigh and Lord Thomas Howard as vice-admirals. Their prime purpose was to destroy the new Armada Philip had got ready against our coasts, which was believed to be lying in Ferrol. But of course the plate-fleets and rich carracks gene-

rally were not to be neglected, and there was some talk of taking the Azores themselves. The expedition was something very like a *fiasco*, and had it not been for Raleigh would have been quite one, and a dangerous one to boot. A few prizes were picked up, and Fayal was taken. But the great plate-fleet was missed, solely through the perversity of Essex; and while the English squadrons were cruising aimlessly about, the Armada sailed from the Groyne for our defenceless coasts. Happily for us it was the story of 1588 over again. "The Lord," as old Salvation Yeo said on that glorious July morning when the Spanish admiral signalled to cut sails and run, "the Lord was fighting for His people." *Afflavit Deus et dissipati sunt.*

But the most memorable of all the actions fought off the Azores, the one which poetry and history have vied with each other in adorning, was that between a Spanish fleet of fifty-three sail and a single English ship, the *Revenge*, commanded by Sir Richard Grenville. The fame of this wonderful fight was spread abroad into all lands, and Grenville and his Englishmen have taken their place now in Valhalla beside Leonidas and his Spartans. Raleigh published the first account anonymously in 1590, the year of the fight, and this was republished with the writer's name eight years later by Hakluyt in his second volume. Sir William Monson, himself a Paladin of those days, was another of its historians, and Linschoten, the Dutch traveller, who was in the islands at the time, gave his version of it. Sir Richard Hawkins, the Complete Seaman as men called him, son of Admiral John, enshrined it in his *Observations*, which were not published however till 1622, after his death. Gervase Markham, still remembered for his writings on husbandry and field-sports, and better qualified perhaps to handle the *Georgics* than the *Aeneid*, but like so many of his time dexterous at rhyming, published a poem in Sir Richard's honour. Bacon, in his *Considerations Touching a*

*War with Spain*, styled the fight "memorable even beyond credit, and to the height of some heroical fable." In later days Hume, a man certainly not given to sentiment, thought it "so singular as to merit a more particular relation," and gave it one with the help of Raleigh. Charles Kingsley has praised it in a spirit of enthusiasm worthy of the heroes themselves; Mr. Froude has given it a special place of honour in his fine eulogy on *England's Forgotten Worthies*, which did something in its day to bring them back into memory; how nobly our Poet Laureate has sung of it every man, woman, and child should know.

Sir Richard Grenville was a Cornishman of noble blood, tracing his line directly back, so the family pedigree said, to Rollo Duke of Normandy. He had lands at Kilhampton in the north of Cornwall, and at Stow near Bideford in Devon, where he seems to have mostly lived when on shore. His father Roger, himself a famous sailor, was one of those who went down in the *Mary Rose* off Portsmouth quay under the King's own eyes. Young Richard was fighting the Turks under Maximilian in Hungary when only sixteen years old. In 1571 he represented Cornwall in Parliament, and in 1577 was made high sheriff of the county and a knight. In 1585 he commanded the squadron which took out Raleigh's first colony to Virginia, and in the following year sailed there again with supplies for the settlers, whom, half starved, and sadly diminished in numbers, Drake had meanwhile carried home. In both voyages he laid hands on a fat prize or two, and also won the reputation of being rather a hard master to serve with. Ralph Lane, the captain of the Virginian colonists, made complaints to Walsingham of Sir Richard's tyrannical conduct and intolerable pride, and desired to be excused from ever serving under him again in any circumstances or on any service. Sir Richard had himself something to say on the other side, so Lane's evidence must be taken

for what it is worth. But there is little doubt that our hero was of a temper unusually imperious and masterful even for those times, when discipline practically meant obedience to the stronger hand. Linschoten tells a curious story of him. "This Sir Richard Greenfield<sup>1</sup>" he says, "was a great and a rich gentleman in England, but he was a man very unquiet in his mind, and greatly affected to war . . . He had performed many valiant acts, and was greatly feared in these islands, and known of every man, but of nature very severe, so that his own people hated him for his fierceness, and spake very hardly of him. . . . He was of so hardy a complexion, that as he continued among the Spanish captains while they were at dinner or supper with him, he would carouse three or four glasses of wine, and in a bravery take the glasses between his teeth and crash them in pieces and swallow them down, so that often times the blood ran out of his mouth without any harm at all unto him, and this was told me by divers credible persons that many times stood and beheld him." This story has naturally puzzled people much. Kingsley, loyal always to his Elizabethan heroes and disliking idle tales of any man, excuses it by a fit of indignation as some tale of Spanish cruelty or oppression. A writer in Lardner's *Cyclopædia*—one would be sorry to think he was Southey—notes it as merely an act of drunken bravery common to the time. There, at any rate, is the story in the pages of the worthy Dutchman, to be taken or left as readers please. In 1588, when England was arming for the Spaniard, Sir Richard had an especial commission from the Queen to guard the Devon and Cornwall coasts, and in the roll of the musters for the latter county, returned at fifteen hundred trained men, he comes first with three hundred and three armed with muskets and bows and arrows.

<sup>1</sup> The name was spelt in all manner of ways then, as the custom was. Raleigh spells it *Grinvile*; Hawkins *Greenfield* and *Grenfeild*; Monson, *Greenvile*; Bacon, *Greenvill*.

Then came this great fight and Sir Richard's death in his fifty-second year. Four sons and five daughters survived him, and his wife, "the fair St. Leger." She died in 1623, and was buried in the Grenvilles' aisle in the church of Bideford of which the family were patrons. The parish register records her as "wife to that famous warrior Sir Richard Grenville, knight, also deceased, being in his lifetime the Spaniards' terror." One of his grandsons was that Sir Bevill Grenville, whom men called the English Bayard. He died as bravely as his grandsire, leading his pikemen against Waller's horse at Lansdowne. But Sir Bevill's younger brother, another Sir Richard, did not bear so good a name. Like all his line he was brave enough, but corrupt, cruel, and mischievous. If his brother was the Bayard, he might have been called the Boar of the West.

In 1590 Philip was busy with his new Armada. The first had failed wofully, it was true, but it had failed, so the Spaniards plumed themselves, by no inferiority of ships or men. The winds and the waves had destroyed it, not English valour or seamanship. The Pope and his priests would no doubt arrange matters better with Heaven next time. Still it behoved him on his part to neglect no precautions; and one of these was to stop the plate-fleet for that year. One, and an unusually rich one, was lying at Havannah ready for the homeward voyage, but the risk of losing so much material at such a time was too great. For somehow or other, despite his high words, Philip could not altogether blink the sad fact that when English and Spanish sailors met on the high seas, it was not as a rule the former who got the worst of it. So the plate-fleet was ordered to winter at Havannah, and even not to sail next year till much later than usual, the chances of bad weather being preferred to the English guns. Elizabeth had been advised of all this, and accordingly in June, 1591, a bold move was made to spoil Philip's game. A squadron under Lord Thomas

Howard, which had been cruising all the year about those waters, was ordered to the Azores; and a fresh one under Lord Cumberland was sent to the Spanish coasts, in case the prize should slip through Howard's hands. But Philip knew what was going on as well as Elizabeth; and in August, about the time when the Havannah fleet might be looked for at the Azores, he dispatched a part of his Armada down to those islands. On the last day of the month the two fleets came in sight of each other off Flores, the westernmost island of the group.

Howard had six men-of-war with him and nine or ten smaller vessels, carrying few or no guns, victuallers, as they were called, and pinnaces. His fighting ships were the *Defiance*, carrying the Admiral's flag, the *Bonaventure*, the *Lion* (in which George Fenner was sailing once again for his old battleground), the *Foresight*, the *Crane*, and the *Revenge*, flying Sir Richard Grenville's flag as Vice-Admiral. Of these the *Foresight* and *Crane* were of small size and light armament. The *Bonaventure* was of six hundred tons, an old ship but a good one. She had been with Drake in the West Indies and had carried his flag in the memorable raid on Cadiz in 1587. Though she had seen now thirty-one years' hard service, the sailors vowed there was not a stronger ship in the world. The *Revenge*, of five hundred tons, was built about 1579 under Hawkins's special supervision, and her lines were thought so highly of that, after the great Armada where she carried Drake's flag, she had been selected by a committee consisting of Lord Howard of Effingham, High Admiral of the Fleet, Drake, Hawkins, Wynter, and other notables, as the model for four new line-of-battle ships. But she was an unlucky vessel, for all her qualities. She had been aground several times, and once had sprung so bad a leak off the Spanish coast that she was with difficulty brought home. The *Defiance* and the *Lion* were probably about the same size. The Spaniards counted fifty-

three sail, all galleons of war; the largest was the *San Philip*, of fifteen hundred tons, carrying eighty-two guns. The Admiral was Don Alphonso Bassan, brother to the Marquess of Santa Cruce, a famous grandee.

Howard had warning of the enemy's coming. Captain Middleton in a swift cruiser had brought the news from Cumberland's squadron, and only just in time. Half the crews were on shore, and barely half of them fit for service. In the *Revenge* there were ninety sick; in the *Bonaventure* not enough in health to handle her main-sail. The whole fleet indeed was in a bad way, "grown foul," says Raleigh, "un-roomaged, and scarcely able to bear any sail for want of ballast, having been six months at the sea before." Howard clearly saw that on this one occasion discretion was the better part of valour. He gave orders for all to go on board as quickly as might be, and weigh anchor. About this part of the story there is some confusion. It is not clear whether Sir Richard could not or would not obey the Admiral's signal. Every one knows the famous words in which he commended his soul to God and his fame to posterity, as he lay dying on the Spaniard's deck. But in Linschoten's version of the story the speech is said to end thus: "But the others of my company have done as traitors and dogs, for which they shall be reproached all their lives, and have a shameful name for ever." This conclusion has been prudently omitted from all the English versions, and Raleigh, who wrote several years before Linschoten, says nothing of it. The original Dutch story, in which these words are said to occur, I have never seen, and should be little the wiser if I had; but in the Latin translation published three years later, in 1599, at the Hague, it is said that Sir Richard, before composing himself to die, declared that he had been basely and cowardly abandoned by his comrades.<sup>1</sup> To talk of men like Howard

and Fenner as cowards is ridiculous. But it is clear, from the trouble Raleigh takes to excuse both parties, that there was some disputing afterwards, when it was seen what this one ship had done, what might have been the issue had the whole squadron given battle. It seems indeed, from his account, that they did what they could do to save their comrade. Thomas Vavasour, in the *Foresight*, especially distinguished himself, fighting his ship for two hours as near the *Revenge* as the weather would permit him, and only at last sheering off when he saw that he could not save Sir Richard and would have much ado to save himself. And the others are also said to have done what wind and weather and their own condition would let them, until they were parted by night. Raleigh was Grenville's particular friend, and a kinsman as well, so he is certain to have said all he could on his side, and as he allows that "if all the rest had entered, all had been lost," the shade of Lord Thomas may fairly be suffered to rest in peace. Sir Richard's well-known temper and his disappointment at seeing so great a fight fought in vain, may no less fairly excuse his hasty words against his comrades—if he ever uttered them.

But to leave this part of the story, which is not the best part, and come to the certain facts. The *Revenge*, having to get her ninety sick men on board, was the last to weigh anchor, and scarcely had she done so, when the squadron of Seville came up on her weather bow and cut her off from the rest of her comrades. The master advised Sir Richard to cut his main-sail and go about, trusting to the speed of the *Revenge* which was notorious. But this the Vice-Admiral utterly refused to do, vowing that he would rather die then and there than dishonour himself, his country, and her

ad mortem sese composuit, testatus primum ignavia fœdissima sociorum derelictum se, ac proditum, mori fidelem Reginæ, ac hactenus gloriæ, plurimæ compotem, summa cum animi sui tranquillitate."

<sup>1</sup> The passage runs thus: "Mira animi constantia tandem, quod lethale vulnus esset, No. 385.—VOL. LXV.



Majesty's flag. So between the two great Spanish squadrons the little English ship held her course, till the huge *San Philip* coming up to windward of her, took the wind out of her sails and ran aboard her.

Then the great fight began, at three o'clock on that August afternoon. The *San Philip* soon had enough of it, "utterly misliking her first entertainment," a broadside of crossbar-shot from the lower tier of the *Revenge*. But there were four other galleons by this time at work, two on the larboard side and two on the starboard, one of them "a very mighty and puissant ship." The Spaniards were all fully manned, some of them carrying as many as five or eight hundred soldiers besides their crews. The *Revenge* had only a few gentlemen-volunteers over and above her crew, of whom ninety, as I have said, were lying sick below: "In ours there were none at all besides the mariners but the servants of the commanders, and some few voluntary gentlemen only." Many times the enemy tried to board, but were always beaten off, into the sea or back into their own ships. All that afternoon, and through the fair summer night till the sun rose again, the fight raged. One by one as the Spanish galleons fell back from their terrible little foe, others came up to fill their places, so that she had never less than two alongside her through all those awful hours, and ere the morning dawned it is counted that fifteen several attempts had been made to board. But so rough was the handling they got that at daybreak the general feeling throughout the Spanish fleet was rather in favour of a compromise than any further engagement.

The dawning light showed no comfort. Not a friend was in sight but the little *Pilgrim*, commanded by Jacob Whiddon, who had hovered all night round the combatants, and in the morning bearing up for the *Revenge*, was "hunted like a hare amongst many ravenous hounds, but escaped." On the previous afternoon another of the

victuallers, the *George Noble* of London, had made her way to the *Revenge*, and her captain, whose name one would be glad to know, had asked Sir Richard "what he would command him"; but the hero bade him shift for himself and leave him to his own fate. Two of the Spanish ships had been sunk, and the rest lay in a ring round the *Revenge*, waiting for the end, but daring no more to come near her.

As the wolves in winter circle  
Round the leaguer on the heath.

The end was not far off. Forty of the Englishmen had been killed and Sir Richard himself mortally wounded; all the powder was done; the pikes all bent or broken; the masts all gone by the board, the rigging and bulwarks all shot away, and there were six feet of water in the hold. So lay the *Revenge*, a mere hulk, washed from side to side by the heaving waves. Then Sir Richard bid the master-gunner to sink the ship. And the man, who was made of the same stuff as his captain, would have done so had not the others stayed him. They had fought for their country, they said, like brave men, and it was surely best that such as were left of them should live to fight for her again. The Spaniards were brave men too, and would treat them courteously. In the end this counsel prevailed, though the valiant gunner would have put an end to his own life at least had he not been forcibly withheld and lashed into his cabin. As for Sir Richard himself he was past disputing any more. He had been twice badly shot, through the body and the head, and was sinking fast. So the *Revenge* yielded, and the Spaniards sent their boats alongside her, very cautiously, for they knew not what the English captain might do in his death-fit. They bore him carefully out of his ship, which was streaming with blood and filled with bodies of dead and wounded men, like a slaughter-house; and they took the others off, promising them a reason-

able ransom, and in the meantime honourable treatment. The Spanish Admiral, like a true and valiant gentleman, received his prisoner with great courtesy, praising him for his courage and for the wondrous fight his men had made against such terrible odds. And all things were done to give him ease, and, if possible, to heal him of his grievous wounds. But no fair words nor surgery could save Sir Richard. He died on the second or third day after his removal, and all the Spanish gentlemen mourned for him as though he had been of their own blood.

The victors kept their faith. All the Englishmen were honourably treated, and sent home into England after moderate ransom. But the *Revenge*, like Sir Richard, had fought her last fight. The Spaniards patched her up as well as they could, and put a crew of their own on board. But a few days after the fight a great storm arose, and the *Revenge* went down off St. Michael with two hundred Spaniards on board, and fourteen of the galleons went

down with her to give her honourable burial. Several more were lost among the other islands, and of the great plate-fleet itself, "the cause of all this woe," what with this storm, and the English cruisers, among whom the brave little *Pilgrim* figures again, less than one-third ever came safe into Spain. "Thus," wrote Raleigh, "it hath pleased God to fight for us;" and thus did Master Gervase Markham write the English hero's epitaph:

●

Rest then, dear soul, in thine all-resting  
 peace,  
 And take my tears for trophies to thy  
 tomb,  
 Let thy lost blood thy unlost fame increase,  
 Make kingly ears thy praises' second  
 womb;  
 That when all tongues to all reports sur-  
 cease,  
 Yet shall thy deeds outlive the day of  
 doom.  
 For even Angels in the Heavens shall  
 sing  
 Grinvile unconquered died, still con-  
 quering.

M. M.



## THREE PERSIAN QUATRAINS.

## I.

(From *Omar Khayyam*.)*Sic transit gloria mundi.*

Yon fort once proudly towered into the blue ;  
 Kings at its portals rendered homage due.  
 Now from its ruins sounds the dove's lone coo,  
 And fondly asks *who* built it, *who, who, who* ?

## II.

(From Sâdi's *Gulistan*. Book iii., Story 27.)

The wise I liken unto coins of gold,  
     Valued in all the earth ;  
 But fools high-born as token coins I hold,  
     Of merely local worth.

## III.

(Author not known.)

When you were born, a helpless child,  
 You only cried while others smiled.  
 So live, that when you come to die,  
 You then may smile and others cry.

T. C. LEWIS.

## MOZART'S LIBRETTIST.

LORENZO DA PONTE was born at Ceneda in 1749, and has left voluminous memoirs (printed in New York in 1830), garrulous and egotistical, but amusing enough. His only claim to fame, and that but a poor one, is having written the words for Mozart's immortal *Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*.

Driven from his father's house by a young stepmother, Da Ponte entered the seminary, where his intelligence, poetic talents, and personal appearance attracted the notice of the Archbishop, who wished him to become a priest. At twenty-two he was already Professor of Rhetoric and Literature and in great request for composing Latin and Italian verses for all occasions. The jealousy of the older masters made life intolerable to him, and he left Ceneda to seek his fortune at Venice. The descriptions of the intrigues and masquerades on the Piazza San Marco are worthy of Benvenuto Cellini, and the handsome young poet threw himself headlong into every kind of dissipation. A sonnet written in the Venetian dialect against the nobility, which became popular among the gondoliers, and a supper of fried ham in Lent, roused the ire of the Council of Ten and of the Inquisition, and Da Ponte fled for his life.

He arrived, with a Horace, a Dante, and a Petrarch for his worldly possessions, at Goritz, and was hospitably received by a young and pretty German hostess. At supper she waited on him in person, and by the aid of a German and Italian dictionary they made known their mutual admiration. When supper was over the pretty innkeeper called one of her maids to sing a well-known German song which begins, "I love a man from the Italian land," and offered him her heart and her purse, which he refused. After a series of

adventures, during which he supported himself by writing odes to the Empress of Austria and various great people, he found himself at Vienna, where Abbé Casti, known for his facile and licentious writings, was in high favour with Count Rosenberg, Director of the Imperial Opera House. Emperor Joseph seems to have taken a liking to the quick-witted, pleasant-mannered, handsome Da Ponte, who could hold his own against the Abbé, and amused Vienna by his lampoons and squibs. Count Rosenberg in vain tried to induce his imperial master to name Casti Cæsarian poet, or, as we should say, poet-laureate. This post had been vacant since the death of Metastasio, who, Da Ponte says, died of grief because the Emperor, finding the innumerable pensions granted by the late Empress Maria Theresa too heavy a burden for the exchequer, had decreed their abolition. He reserved the right to continue those he considered proper, and among others he confirmed Metastasio's, but the poor old poet only lived to enjoy it for a few days. Maria Theresa must have scattered money broadcast, to judge by Da Ponte's story of the Bishop of Goritz, who was much esteemed by her. The father, mother, brother, sisters, and servants of the Bishop had all received pensions; at last he complained that his father would be obliged to sell two old horses, "faithful beasts that had worked for thirty-three years," because he could not afford to feed useless animals. The Empress immediately bestowed a pension of three hundred florins a year "to the faithful horses of the Bishop's father."

In Vienna, at the house of Baron Vetzlar, Da Ponte met Mozart. "I can never remember without pride and pleasure," he writes, "that Europe,

and indeed the whole world, owe in a great measure to my perseverance and firmness the exquisite compositions of so admirable a genius."

Martini at that time was the idol of Vienna, and his opera, *Il Burbero di Buon Cuore*, with words by Da Ponte, had been most successful. In spite of the cabals of Abbé Casti, Martini asked for another *libretto* which Da Ponte promised to write, at the same time offering to do one for Mozart. The latter suggested *Le Mariage de Figaro* by Beaumarchais.

"This," says our poet, "pleased me; but a great difficulty stood in the way. Only a short while before the Emperor had forbidden the German company to act this comedy, as unfit for decent ears. How was it to be submitted to him as a subject for an opera? Baron Vetzlar generously offered to pay me a handsome sum for the words, and to arrange for the opera to be given in London or in France, if it were refused in Vienna. This I declined, and begged that the words and music should be composed in secret, while we waited for a favourable opportunity to propose it to the directors of the theatre or to the Emperor. This I courageously undertook to manage. Only Martini knew of my design, and out of admiration for Mozart he consented to wait for his *libretto* until I had finished *Figaro*. So I set to work, and as fast as I wrote the words Mozart wrote the music. By great good fortune there was a lack of scores at the Opera. Seizing this opportunity, I went, without saying a word to any one, straight to the Emperor and offered him *Figaro*. 'What!' he exclaimed. 'Do you not know that Mozart, excelling in instrumental music, has never written but one opera, and that was not remarkable?' With humility I replied that but for the clemency of his Majesty I should not have written more than one play in Vienna. 'True,' he said; 'but I have forbidden this very comedy to be acted by the German players.' I answered 'Yes, but having composed a drama for music,

it is no longer a comedy. I have perforce omitted many scenes and shortened others, and I have omitted or shortened everything that could mar the decency and delicacy of an entertainment destined to be honoured by the presence of sovereign majesty. The music, so far as I can judge, is of marvellous beauty!' 'Very well,' was the gracious reply; 'in that case I trust to your taste about the music and to your prudence for the morality. Give the score to the copyist.' I ran at once to Mozart, and had not finished telling him the good news when an imperial messenger arrived, ordering him to go at once to the palace with the score. He obeyed, and the Emperor, whose taste in music, as in all things pertaining to art, was exquisite, expressed the greatest admiration for several pieces. This did not please the Viennese composers, nor did it please Count Rosenberg, who disliked that kind of music; least of all did it please Casti, who dared no longer say that Da Ponte could not write poetry. These two good friends were not able to injure us much, but they did what they could. A certain Bussane, versed in every trade save that of honesty, who had charge of the costumes and scenery, heard there was to be a ballet in *Figaro*. So he hastened to tell Count Rosenberg, and I was sent for. Frowning severely, the Count said: 'So Mr. Poet has inserted a ballet into *Figaro*?' 'Yes, your Excellency.' 'Mr. Poet does not know that the Emperor will not allow ballets at his theatre?' 'No, your Excellency.' 'Very well, Mr. Poet; then I tell you so now.' 'Yes, your Excellency.' 'And what is more, you must strike it out, Mr. Poet.' This *Mr. Poet* was said in a way that meant *Mr. Donkey*. But my *your Excellency* had much the same intonation. 'Have you the libretto with you?' 'Yes, your Excellency.' 'This is what one does.' And he tore out two pages of the manuscript and threw them into the fire. 'You see, Mr. Poet, I can do

everything. Go!' Mozart was in despair when I told him what had happened. He wanted to go to Count Rosenberg,—to chastise Bussane,—to appeal to Cæsar,—to take back the score. I begged him to wait a few days and leave everything to me. The rehearsal was fixed for that very day, and the Emperor had promised to attend it. He came, and half the Viennese nobility with him. Applause was general during the first act, until the by-play between Almaviva and Susanna during the ballet. But as his Excellency *Do Everything* had torn out these pages, the actors gesticulated while the orchestra remained mute. It was like a scene for marionettes. 'What is this?' said the Emperor to Abbé Casti, who was sitting behind him. 'Your Majesty must ask the poet,' replied the Abbé, with a malicious smile. So I was called, and instead of speaking, handed my manuscript, into which I had again inserted the ballet, to the Emperor. He looked at it, and inquired why the dance was not performed. By my continued silence the Emperor understood that something was wrong, and turned to the Count for an explanation. Rosenberg stammered out a lame excuse that there were no ballet-dancers at the opera-house. 'I suppose the other theatres can furnish them. Let Da Ponte have as many as he wants,' ordered the Sovereign. In half an hour twenty-four dancers were ready, and the rejected scene was given at the end of the second act amid general applause."

Some time after Da Ponte wrote words for three operas simultaneously. The Emperor bet one hundred sequins that he would not be able to do it, and with characteristic bombast he replied; "At night I shall write for Mozart, and imagine I am reading the *Inferno* of Dante; for Martini I shall reserve my mornings and think I am studying Petrarch; the evenings shall be dedicated to Salieri, when Tasso will be my prototype." Da Ponte gives a long-winded description of how sadly he was missed by the wits and fine ladies

of Vienna while he worked for twelve hours a day with a bottle of Tokay on his right hand, a large inkstand in front, and a box of Seville snuff to his left. A pretty waiting-maid brought him sweet biscuits and coffee whenever he rang, and in sixty-three days the *libretti* were finished. Martini's *L'Arbore di Diana* was represented first, and well received. *Don Giovanni* was ordered to be given at Prague for the arrival of the Princess of Tuscany, and Da Ponte went there to put it on the stage; but before it was ready he was recalled to Vienna because Salieri's opera *Assur* had been chosen for the gala night in honour of the marriage of the Archduke Francis.

From Prague Da Ponte received glowing accounts of the success of *Don Giovanni*. "Long live Da Ponte! Long live Mozart! All managers and all lovers of music must bless them. So long as they live there will be no want of operas,"—wrote a friend who evidently knew our poet's little weakness. The Emperor ordered that the opera should be given in Vienna. "How can I write it?" says Da Ponte. "*Don Giovanni* was a failure! All, save Mozart, thought something was wanting. We added a little,—we changed some songs,—and it was repeated. Again it failed! Only the Emperor said: 'The opera is divine; perhaps even better than *Figaro*; but it is not food suited to the teeth of my Viennese.' When I told this to Mozart, he answered with a quiet smile,—'Let us give them time to chew it.' He was right. I induced the Director to give *Don Giovanni* several times with ever-increasing success; and at length the Viennese began to taste its beauty and understand that it is one of the finest works ever produced for the stage."

Soon after the Emperor Joseph died, Da Ponte fell into disgrace with his successor Leopold, and left Vienna for Trieste. There he married an English girl, and after a wandering life in France, Saxony, and Holland, went to London, where he became stage-man-

ager and poet for a certain William Taylor, *impresario* of the Italian Opera. Manager, actors, and poet quarrelled and intrigued perpetually, and the latter, being induced to back bills for Mr. Taylor, was imprisoned and ruined. He then set up a book-shop in London, -- "in order," as he says, "to diffuse in that most noble city the treasures of our Italian literature. On the 1st of March, 1801, I had nine hundred volumes of admirable books bought for little at sales and from booksellers who did not know their value. I soon made not less than four hundred guineas, and bought more old editions and ordered new books from Italy which aided me to illumine the minds of the most educated and erudite English. Among these were the celebrated Roscoe and Walker, to whom Italian literature owes so much."

Poor Lorenzo Da Ponte had no sooner made a little money than Taylor's creditors came down upon him with other bills, and he was again ruined. He consoled himself with highflown sentiment, and embarked for America, where the parents of his wife were living. There, after trying many trades in various cities, he at last settled down in New York and taught Italian to young ladies. Fifty pages of the Memoirs are filled with letters of his pupils, and his own corrections and remarks upon their intelligence and wit. To his best scholars he gave the names of flowers and wrote verses in their honour; but he complains that Hymen robbed his garden of its finest ornaments, and once more he fell back on the book-trade, opening a small library. This, he remarks, was fortunately placed next door to a shop where sweets and cakes were sold, so that at least he had the satisfaction of seeing fine equipages standing in the street outside his door.

His vanity, which was however mixed with very real patriotism, received great satisfaction by the arrival in New York of Garcia and his incomparable daughter Malibran with an

Italian company. Da Ponte says they opened the eyes of the Americans to the beauties of Italian music by giving Rossini's *Barbiere di Siviglia*, and he never rested until he had persuaded Garcia to put *Don Giovanni* on the stage. It was very successful; words, music, and singers, particularly the brilliant, pretty, and amiable Zerlina, were admired and praised, and the city was divided in two camps, one for Rossini, the other for Mozart, greatly to the advantage of the manager. Da Ponte was allowed to sell an English translation of his *libretto* in the theatre for the use of the public who did not know Italian. "I sold a prodigious number," he says with his usual exaggeration. "Also by good luck I put some copies in a lottery-ticket shop, and the man in a few hours sent to ask me for more, giving me sixteen dollars for those he had sold. As I took them my eyes fell on a notice,—*To-morrow, the lottery will be drawn, sixteen dollars a ticket.* My good star led me to leave the money with him in exchange for a ticket, and next morning I was awoken by the shopman who announced that I had won five hundred dollars! Blessing Mozart, *Don Giovanni*, and the lottery, I at once wrote to Italy for more books to increase my stock, out of which I chose a selection to present to the University where I taught Italian literature to a few members."

On his seventy-ninth birthday Lorenzo Da Ponte made a magniloquent speech to his pupils which fills twenty-two closely printed pages. "Every one applauded," he records, but pathetically adds, "my triumph ended in fine words. Not a subscription to my proposed course of lectures! Not a single new pupil!"

The year of Da Ponte's death is apparently unknown. He printed the last volume of his Memoirs when he was ninety-seven, ending with a quotation from Petrarch, "I know my faults, and I deplore them."

JANET ROSS.

## A CURIOUS DISCOVERY.

PROFESSOR FLEG's methods with the golf-club were remarkable. He was in every way a remarkable man, and in every department of his life a methodical man. If he ever erred it was, as in the present instance, by regarding all things as capable of being brought into the domain of exact science; for it was in this attitude that he approached the game of golf, which is scarcely susceptible of such treatment.

The occasion has now become historical on which he sought the counsel of the wizard—the great medicine man—of golf, in the following terms:—"I like, my dear sir, to do everything methodically. All through my life I have approached things in that way, and I have not yet been completely beaten, if I may say so, by anything. Now I am taking up the game of golf club by club—each club in turn. Hitherto I have devoted my attention solely to the driver. I now propose to make myself thorough master of the iron. Would you therefore have the kindness to show me, my dear sir, exactly in what manner you hold your hands while playing an iron stroke?"

Such are the methods of a conquering intellect; but the club-by-club system did not exhaust the peculiarities of Professor Fleg's fashion of mastering the game of golf. For he put himself into what he conceived to be the position indicated by the best authorities and illustrated by diagrams in many highly scientific treatises on the game, and had in attendance the Pebblecombe carpenter who then and there constructed around the Professor's feet a wooden framework. This framework the Professor's caddie (a long-suffering and much-to-be-pitied person) carried round with the

Professor whenever that great man engaged in the game of golf, and planted it upon the *teeing* ground, so that if, as sometimes occurred, the Professor *topped* the ball or otherwise misconducted himself with regard to it, he could at least be sure of erring on the most approved methods.

Now Colonel Burscough was not a man of science, and greatly preferred hitting the ball in a style which the most charitable critic could not call orthodox to missing it in the correct fashion beloved by Mr. Fleg. "Brute force, my dear sir,—no science," was Mr. Fleg's whispered soliloquy (for even in soliloquy his speech was studiously courteous) whenever the Colonel in his attitude of Philistine drove beyond the limits of the Professor's highly cultured power. And this frequently happened, for the Colonel's physique was better adapted than that of Mr. Fleg to the complex purposes of the noble game. Nevertheless Mr. Fleg's scientific perseverance was rewarded by a steady though gradual improvement such as did not attend Colonel Burscough's more rough and ready methods. Therefore in the many matches that they had played together, though Colonel Burscough had always hitherto had the better of it, yet his advantage grew less with every match, until there were critics to prophesy (under their breath, be it said, and far, very far, behind the Colonel's back) that the day would eventually come when science would make its power felt and the Man of Learning come in a hole ahead of the Man of War.

In prospect of that day all Pebblecombe held its breath in an awful silence, for it was shrewdly thought that on such a day as that it would be evil for any who came within reach



of the Colonel's wrath. For though the Colonel's methods with the golf club differed absolutely from those of Mr. Fleg, they were not one whit less remarkable. The game of golf is one which, it is well known, demands peculiar equanimity of temper and the long-suffering patience which is so eminently characteristic of the Scot. Now excellent man as Colonel Burscough was, equanimity of temper was not one of his natural gifts. A game of golf with the Colonel was therefore a mixed form of pleasure—a fearful joy. A measure of amusement was assured, but it had need to be amusement carefully disguised, for golf clubs are formidable weapons in the hands of an angry man. When things were going well all was sweetness and light ; but golf links are treacherous places with dire pitfalls, named bunkers, into which the ball sidles like an ant into the lair of the ant-lion. In the first bunker Colonel Burscough was as good as gold ; in the second he began to talk in Hindostani ; and in the third he sometimes grew a little angry. Then his caddie, who knew him well, would hand the Colonel his niblick, and place in a convenient corner of the bunker an old umbrella, which he always carried with him to perform the office of a scapegoat. For if the Colonel failed to extricate his ball from the bunker on the first attempt his mood grew dangerous. The niblick strokes fell faster until the ball flew from the bunker, and the Colonel being now very angry indeed would look around him for some object upon which his wrath could spend itself. Whereon he would see the umbrella, to which, as having “ caught his eye,” he would at once attribute his calamities, and summarily execute it at the edge of the niblick. The caddie, having kept himself in the background until the extreme fury of the Colonel's wrath had spent itself, would come up with discreet humility to receive the tail end only of the storm, and to retrieve the umbrella which had been the vicarious sufferer in his stead.

The occasions on which the Colonel had sworn once and for ever to abandon the game of golf are almost beyond counting. He would wave his hand with tragic pathos towards the links of Pebblecombe and declare with sad solemnity—“ This place has seen me for the last time ; ” and in this black mood he would remain till dinner. With the soup, however, life began to wear a brighter aspect, with the joint he began to repent him of his determination, and with the dessert he was ready to play any man in the world, on any terms that were at all reasonable, on the very next day.

But besides these numerous occasions on which he had set no outward and visible seal to his immutable resolve, there were other greater ones on which he had confirmed himself therein by a solemn burning of his ships—his entire set of golf clubs. Twice he had built a small bonfire on the edge of the links and then and there made a solemn holocaust of his clubs, his balls, his red coat and all his golfing paraphernalia. Many times also he had broken all his clubs over his knee, that he might never be tempted again to play the game which cost him so much mental anguish ; but always, on the morrow morning he had appeared at the club-maker's with an order for a new set.

So that now these two methods of treatment were familiar to Pebblecombe — the Ordeal by Dichotomy, (or division in two) as Mr. Fleg humorously named the club-breaking plan, and the Ordeal by Fire, which was the Professorial name for the holocaust—for it was the Colonel's constant contention that his clubs were possessed by some malign witchcraft so that they would not hit the ball. There remained yet another in the Colonel's repertory — namely, the Ordeal by Water,—and this was put into execution on the day on which the Colonel was first beaten in a match with Mr. Fleg. For the day which all Pebblecombe expected in fear and trembling came at last. The methods

of science proved triumphant, and Mr. Fleg, with a proud flush on his brow, and not without a tremor at his heart, walked into the Golf Club *one up* against the Colonel at the eighteenth hole, having added insult to injury by laying an iniquitous *stymie* at the very end when the Colonel was lying dead at the hole and certain of a half.

There is no measure in the good gifts of Providence. To many it would have seemed that the blessedness of having at length attained the mastery over one who had so often beaten him would be enough to fill the cup of happiness for any ordinary professor of anatomy to the brim. But Mr. Fleg was no ordinary professor, and he was dealt with in no ordinary way. About a twelvemonth after this first and epoch-making victory, he began to make some very singular and interesting discoveries.

Now, there is on the beach at Pebblecombe a stretch of bluish-grey mud, of no very great extent. It is very far out upon the sand—so far that only at the lowest tides is it uncovered. It happened that on a Sunday Mr. Fleg was once walking in a pensive, Sabbatical mood along the sands by the sea. The tide was unusually far out, and this mud was uncovered. Mr. Fleg prodded the mud thoughtfully with his stick, and suddenly began to consider it with greater interest. It contained woody fibres in a fair state of preservation—the fibre in many instances of quite large tree trunks.

Now there are people to whom this fibre would have said nothing, unless possibly *decayed cabbage*, or something unpleasantly suggestive of that kind. But it was crammed full of meaning to such a mind as Mr. Fleg's. It said *a submerged forest*—and a submerged forest included remains of the denizens of that forest, of who could say what interest and antiquity! For a moment Mr. Fleg's imagination peopled its once mighty shade with quite impossible denizens — pterodactyls,

ichthyosauri, megatheriums. Then his archæological sense smiled at the anachronisms into which his scientific fervour had launched him, and he corrected himself with softly-spoken soliloquy—"Cave-bear, my dear sir, cave-man, at the earliest; more probably old British ox and Irish elk; almost certainly modern fauna."

Then his anatomical imagination saw himself constructing out of a *humerus* or *tibia* mighty ruminants of primeval days. Mr. Fleg went home that Sabbath evening in a state which in any other man the vulgar might have ascribed to the effects of alcohol. To say he was in a fever of wild excitement is to give not the faintest suggestion of his mental condition. To say that he was covered from head to foot in blue mud is to express but feebly his outward aspect; for never had Mr. Fleg so bitter reason to bewail his short-sightedness, which, fortified with double spectacles as he was, compelled him to go upon his hands and knees, grovelling almost like a serpent, in order to make a close enough examination to reveal the treasures of which he was in search.

Suffice it to say that he returned in a state of general disorder which was a pain to the faithful whom he met on their way to evening church, but with a scientific joy without bounds in his heart, and a small piece of the decayed horn of a deer in his pocket. Nor would he ever have ceased from his search until the shades of night had come upon him, had not the jealous sea come lapping up to him and driven him back step by step over the mud until its nearest limit was swallowed by the envious waves. Then Mr. Fleg went slowly home with the one treasure-trove in his pocket, and elsewhere, impartially upon him, the blue mud.

Now after this auspicious beginning Mr. Fleg bought a nautical calendar which gave information of the behaviour of the tides; and whenever the sea was sufficiently far out to discover even a portion,—and for a few minutes only,—of the precious blue mud, he

would neglect the royal and ancient game of golf itself to go down with a coadjutor, in whom he had inspired a small share of his own enthusiasm, and dig and delve in this dirty clay.

And to tell truth he made several interesting discoveries in the shape of bits of bone and horn and flint arrow-heads and a portion of a human skull. Then he would sit hours into the night poring over his bits of bone, examining them through a microscope, comparing them with the descriptions and pictures in certain very large and heavy books, containing fearful representations of huge skeletons of animals such as no living man has been so unfortunate as to meet. Then on a vast sheet of paper he would begin, with pencil and scale and compasses, to map out a huge skeleton of his own devising—leaving only a little gap, generally somewhere down upon the shin-bone, into which, when all the rest was finished, he would fit the little bit of brown bone which was the basis of the whole mighty superstructure, and would say proudly, "Such, my dear sir, was the creature who roamed in the primeval forest of which we see here to-day the few submerged and wonderfully preserved remains."

Sometimes it would be only a tooth that would supply him with the data for the construction of a whole mighty skeleton—so great, so inconceivable to lesser minds, are the achievements of science and the knowledge of men so richly endowed as Professor Fleg.

But even as it was in the days of old when that hero of *Henry's First Latin Book*, Balbus, feasted the town at twenty sesterces a head and there were still found some, as historians tell us, who laughed—so too now, in in Pebblecombe, there were found persons so unappreciative of the great discoveries of science as to scoff while Mr. Fleg drew his majestic skeletons.

Chief, perchance, among the scoffers was Colonel Burscough, as kind-hearted a volcanic-tempered man as ever lived, yet a British Philistine to the very backbone of him.

The Colonel would stand before the fire with his hands behind his back in Professor Fleg's study, examining with head thrown back the Professor's latest masterpiece in constructive anatomy. So he would stand for awhile in silence—then take the cheroot from his lips to say with all the air of eulogy—"Jammed extraordinary imagination you must have, Fleg—eh?"

"Imagination! my dear sir," Mr. Fleg would reply, permitting the slightest note expressive of the shock which the word bore with it to modify the habitual courtesy of his address. "Imagination! Pardon me, my dear sir, if I venture, with all deference, to take exception to the term you are good enough to employ with reference to that drawing. I assure you there is no imagination used or needed in the construction of such a skeleton on such convincing evidence as the splendid molar which you see restored to its appropriate jaw. It is, my dear sir, as capable of scientific demonstration as any one of Euclid's theorems. Let me refer you——" Here the Professor began turning over the leaves of one of his ponderous volumes, with a running fire of extracts and commentary, while Colonel Burscough took a seat in the armchair and began wondering how he had lost his last golf match.

When Professor Fleg had triumphantly vindicated himself, the Colonel would rise from the chair, examine the molar as if he were comparing it with the essence of all the scientific reading to which he had not listened, and say, "Yes, Fleg—you are right, of course. Jammed like an old sheep's tooth though, after all—eh?"

Mr. Fleg courteously admitted that there was some superficial resemblance, and began to talk to the Colonel—as to one professionally interested in small artillery—about the flint arrow-heads.

The more important of his discoveries—if one may speak so of a matter in which every discovery was of great import—Mr. Fleg communicated from time to time to a

certain learned journal which no one in Pebblecombe, except himself, was able to read with any intelligent appreciation. Hitherto, however, Mr. Fleg had been fortunate enough to make no discovery which ran counter to the deductions of other scientists. With the flint arrow-heads he found the skull of the cave-man, the bones of the cave-bear, the horns of the great Irish elk, and the remains of other creatures, all of whom, as is well known, lived together in love and unity.

Then, unheralded by any miraculous premonition or unusual circumstance, the sun dawned—quite in its ordinary manner—upon a day which was to be credited with a discovery at once epoch-making and epoch-breaking—a discovery perhaps the most portentous of any that had been known since men began to read the world's history that is written in its stones and clay. Among the mass of decaying vegetable fibre and blue mud—of a consistency somewhat thicker than chewed tobacco—among the relics of the cave-man, the cave-bear, and the elk, Mr. Fleg came upon something that beyond question was a lump of iron!

Possibly every reader may not at once appreciate the tremendous, the appalling significance of this discovery. But remember the circumstances. Remember that this lump of metal, more than a pound in weight, was found among the flint arrow-heads, among the remains of creatures the history of whose life was part of the story of the world when it was very young—when, in fact, it was in its stone age. So at least it had ever been supposed. Science had given its united voice in favour of the opinion that the cave-man and these animals who were found to be of his time, had existed in the very infancy of the age of stone—that his weapons were at best of flint, and those not of a high finish. Science had asked sympathy for the cave-man in his apparently unequal fight with the great denizens of the forest

in which he lived. But now—what did this discovery say? No less a thing than this—that Science had been mistaken in the matter from first to last—that all previous theories must be cast to the wind (for one negative condemns an hypothesis, no matter by how many affirmatives it be supported)—that the comparatively sophisticated age of iron must be put back perhaps thousands of years in the world's story—must be put away back into the fancied simplicity of the age of stone. With this iron weapon (for doubtless it was in the manufacture of weapons of offence, that Tubal Cain, in the early struggle for existence, first exercised his art)—with this fairly adequate iron weapon the cave-man, who had so long and so nefariously usurped our sympathy, might have felled to the earth perhaps no less mighty a quarry than the Great Irish Elk itself!

In such manner did Mr. Fleg expound his theme to his admiring listeners while he held in a hand that trembled with infinitely more sense of the preciousness of its burden than if it had borne a nugget of like size, the miraculous iron weapon that he had delved from the blue mud. True, the exact nature and outline of the weapon were as yet somewhat shrouded in mystery, and in what Mr. Fleg referred to as “ferric oxide, my dear sir, or rust,” but it was abundantly evident from its mass and rough shape, that it had been intended for a hitting weapon of some kind.

Next day, by special messenger, Mr. Fleg sent this wonderful relic to a shop in London with which he had had frequent dealings, and where he could trust the care and knowledge of the workmen, with orders that the ferric oxide should be removed with such skill and science as these specialists had at their command. Meanwhile he wrote off to all the scientific and leading papers in the country, giving an account of the discovery, with photographs of the weapon in its rough state (encrusted with mud)

and minute descriptions of the nature of the clay and other relics in whose company it had been found.

A perfect storm of correspondence followed both in the public prints and in the shape of private communications to the Professor—so that he found himself obliged to temporarily engage a special clerk, to answer at his dictation the mass of his correspondents.

Meanwhile all Pebblecombe, and Mr. Fleg particularly, held its breath in expectation of the return, cleansed of its swathing of “ferric oxide, my dear sir, or rust,” of the weapon which had dealt such a blow to all the previous hypotheses of Science.

Mr. Fleg was playing golf when he received a telegram informing him that the relic, restored so far as might be to its first form, was that day being despatched again by special messenger from London—to speak exactly, Mr. Fleg was in a bunker. In an instant all the familiar horrors of that situation were dissipated. He gave up the hole to Colonel Burscough, with whom he was playing, and felt scarcely a pang of regret. He neglected his methodical grasp of the driver, he forgot about the wooden foot-framework, which lay idle in his caddie's hand, while Colonel Burscough with immense joy won from him hole after hole. At the end of the round he paid to the Colonel their statutory wager of half-a-crown without his usual harmless necessary joke, “Look upon it, my dear sir, I would beg you, in the light simply of a loan,” and hurried the Colonel greatly in his preparations for leaving the Golf Club and walking back to Pebblecombe.

On the walk Mr. Fleg was silent and abstracted. At the door of his house he was trembling with an overpowering nervousness. “My friend,” he said to the Colonel, as the latter was about to leave him (it was the preface to some very momentous statement when Mr. Fleg abandoned his usual style of address, as “my dear sir,” for the yet more impressive cordi-

ality of “my friend”), “My friend, I would beg of you a favour. I would beg of you to come in with me and be present with me on this which is immensely the greatest moment of my life. There will be awaiting me, as I conceive, within this little villa, a treasure which shall alter the reading of nearly all the history of the world's creation—an iron weapon coeval with the cave-dweller. Will you be with me, my friend, at this great moment of my life, when I shall see my treasure trove in something approaching its original shape?”

“Why, yes, of course, Fleg; jammed interesting, you know. Great privilege I mean to say. Assure you I feel it so.”

The *savant* grasped his friend's hand with grateful pressure, and the two entered the house together. The servant told Mr. Fleg that a young man from London had delivered a parcel, with careful instructions for its safety and welfare. Mr. Fleg led the way into his study, and there beneath the approving figures of the giant skeletons rested, in an ordinary deal box, on an ordinary mahogany table, the iron weapon of the cave-man. Then Mr. Fleg rang the bell for hammer and chisel. His nervousness was something pitiable to see. He could not sit still while the tools were brought. His hand trembled so that he could not use them to any effect when they came.

“Here, let me!”

Colonel Burscough took them from him and began to work and hammer on the box in angry vigour. Mr. Fleg seated himself in an armchair at the other end of the room, and burying his face in his hands rocked himself back and forward in the agony of his suspense. He could not bear to look.

There was a sound of crashing wood and rending metal. Then there was comparative silence while the Colonel rummaged in the shavings and paper with which the box was stuffed. Mr. Fleg no longer groaned. His suspense



had become too intense for any expression, and he remained motionless, without a sound awaiting Colonel Burscough's word that the relic was revealed.

The waiting seemed very long. Mr. Fleg grasped an arm of his chair with either hand, and in a semi-catalepsy of the muscles fastened his eyes rigidly upon Colonel Burscough's face to read the feelings evoked by the first sight of the wondrous relic.

For the Colonel's expression had undergone a singular change.

The silence grew deeper and more painful, and to Mr. Fleg it began to seem that Colonel Burscough, the room, the relic, everything, were far, far away. He was mocked by a sense of dream-like unreality.

And the change on Colonel Burscough's face responded likewise to a vision of things far away—far distant both in time and place. He felt himself transported back to a certain day a twelvemonth since, and to a painful scene of his humiliation upon the Pebblecombe links—the day on which he had first suffered defeat at the learned hands of Mr. Fleg. The whole scene was before him. The day was a particularly warm and sunny one. The bees hummed over the wild flowers, the sand-flies buzzed in the bunkers. Warmth and flies are fearful aggravations to the wrath of an angry man. And Colonel Burscough, on this particularly beautiful summer's day, saw himself a very angry man indeed—angry so much beyond his wont that his anger found no expression; it was at silent white heat. He took his clubs from his caddie with an unusual gentleness that had meaning. He handled them with the caressant ferocity of a cat playing with a mouse. He strode over the great ridge of pebbles which keeps back the sea at Pebblecombe and down on to the sands. It was low tide. No one was in the immediate neighbourhood; but he well knew that in ambush on the top of the pebble ridge, peering over, were all the members there present of the Royal Pebble-

combe Golf Club and all the club-makers, caddies, ground-men, and all who were in any capacity whatsoever associated with the royal and ancient game in the vicinity. And each looked over with all his two eyes, as carefully as though he had been stalking a tiger, and gazed at the Colonel who had seated himself on the foot of the ridge.

The Colonel saw himself take off his boots. And though none of the watchers might know what this betokened, they held a collective silence and looked with all their eyes.

The Colonel took off his clothes—that is to say very nearly all—retaining only such as a perfunctory regard for decency forbade him to part with. Then he walked out, carrying his clubs over the sand.

And all the while he was conscious of the watchers who watched him in silence as he walked, walking with the deliberate purpose of a man whose mind is firmly fixed. He did not pause an instant when he reached the sea. He went straight in, and presently the breakers were dashing now over his hips, now over his shoulders. If he went deeper he would have to swim. Once he stumbled badly, but contrived to recover himself; then he drew himself to his full height in the water and raised his right hand high out of it. And in his right hand was a golf club. He whirled this golf club once round his head, as a cowboy twirls his lasso—then launched it out, far as ever he could throw it, into the sea.

Then he reached down for another, under his left arm—even as an archer reaches for the arrows in his quiver—and hurled that one after the first.

Again and yet again, and again he did this—until the whole set of nine clubs had been hurled beyond the furthest breaker. Then he turned and strode back out of the surf, the blackness of his mood a trifle tempered by the completeness of the sacrifice. And thus was consummated the third and last of the great ordeals—the Ordeal by Water.



Such was the vision that passed before the Colonel's dreamy eyes while he gazed upon Mr. Fleg's wondrous relic, and while Mr. Fleg grasped convulsively the two arms of his chair.

At length to Mr. Fleg's expectancy the very silence grew full of menacing voices. He could endure no longer.

"Well?" he gasped.

Then Colonel Burscough roused himself from his abstraction and he too said "Well!"—but without the interrogation.

Then he paused again; but after a moment he resumed, speaking very solemnly—"Fleg, do you remember that day on which you first beat me in a golf match?"

Did he remember it? Would he ever forget it? Mr. Fleg thought the Colonel was about to draw some fruitful comparison between that great red-letter day in the professorial life and this. "Indeed, my friend, I remember it well," Mr. Fleg gasped from the chair.

"And on that day, Fleg, I waded far out into the sea. I threw my golf clubs

from me—for ever, as I thought—into the Atlantic."

"I know, I know, my friend," said Mr. Fleg moved, in this the day of his brightest triumph, to deepest sympathy for that the blackest day of defeat for his friend.

"I slipped," the Colonel continued. "For a moment I thought I was drowned——"

"I remember," Mr. Fleg murmured, with yet warmer sympathy.

"But I recovered myself by sticking one of my clubs down through the sea upon the treacherous mud on which I slipped. I recovered myself, but the club broke short off at the head."

"Ah!" said Mr. Fleg vaguely.

"It was the niblick, Fleg—and I had thought never to see that niblick-head again. But here—steel yourself, Fleg, I fear this may be a blow to you—it was no cave-man's weapon, this, Fleg; only a bunker-man's—this iron weapon of your Stone Age is that very niblick. Here is the inscription, legible on it still — *James Wilson, Maker, St. Andrews.*"

HORACE HUTCHINSON.

## COWPER'S LETTERS.

It is often said that the delightful art of letter-writing is dead. No doubt circumstances are not so favourable to it as they once were, as they were, for instance, in the last century, the golden age of the letter-writer. It never does to have too much of a good thing, and so Rowland Hill, and Penny Posts, and hourly deliveries, have very nearly killed the old-fashioned letter which rambled and gossiped and wandered at will up and down all sorts of subjects, overflowing into every corner of the paper except just the little space required for the address on one side and the seal on the other. When you paid fourpence, or sixpence, or more for a letter, or had had the trouble of asking a Parliamentary acquaintance for a frank, you naturally took your money's worth. And then in the last century everybody seems to have had plenty of time; nowadays we are all in a hurry from morning to night. And hurry, which ruins nearly everything from bootlaces to epic poems, is no friend to letters, though not so fatal to them as to more ambitious productions. Byron may dash down on his paper, in his headlong, helter-skelter sort of way, the last witticisms and personalities that happen to be simmering in his excited brain, and the effect is very characteristic and very telling. But the best letters cannot be written so. Hurry and exuberance of this kind weary in the end, and leave an uncomfortable sensation of disorder and unrest in the mind; the highest productions of every kind, in art, or music, or literature, however intense may be the immediate delight they give, leave the mind to settle in the end into a sort of quiet enjoyment. The pleasure over, we rest in calm satisfaction. And this must be the

law in letter-writing, as in everything else, if letters are to be read. They can only rank as literature by submitting to conditions to which literature submits. And there will not only be the general conditions attached to all composition to be taken into account, but special conditions attached to this particular form of composition. It is at first sight a little doubtful what the characteristics of a good letter are. Some people think it merely a matter of conversation through the post; and there is certainly a good deal to be said for this theory; the elaborately composed letter is the worst possible letter. Ease and naturalness, lightness of touch, the sense for the little things which are the staple of conversation and correspondence as well as of life, the ever-present consciousness that one is simply one's self and not an author or an editor, are of all qualities the most essential in a letter. A good letter is like a good present—a link between two personalities, having something of each in it. It is emphatically from one man, or woman, to another, in contrast, for instance, to a newspaper, which is from nobody or anybody to anybody or nobody. But if this were all, Byron would be incontestably the best of our letter-writers. Nothing could possibly be more personal, and characteristic and spontaneous, than his letters: his likes and dislikes, his pleasures and disappointments, his passing fancies, schemes, whims, are poured out in them with a force and freshness which are unrivalled and inimitable. It is just as if he were talking, and talking with the freedom and openness of a man at a friendly supper-party; and of course his evident frankness doubles the interest and importance of it all. But after

all writing is not talking, and an exuberance which might perhaps be delightful, when broken by other voices and lighted up by all the play of eye and feature, becomes after a time intolerable in a volume of letters. It is the same thing, I suppose, as one sees in portraits, where a too energetic or spirited attitude nearly always produces failure. Whatever makes a claim to permanence must have at least a suggestion of repose about it.

English literature is fairly rich in good letters, and in the very first rank of the best come the letters of the recluse, who might naturally be supposed to have nothing to write about, the quiet, retiring, half-Methodist poet, William Cowper. They are written in the most beautifully easy English, and he steers his way with unfailing instinct between the opposite dangers of pompousness and vulgarity, which are the Scylla and Charybdis of the letter-writer. They are not set compositions, but he never forgets that he is writing, not talking; they contain long discussions, yet he does not often forget that he is writing a letter and not a book. The most striking proof of his wonderful gifts in this direction is the story of his life. He was not a leading figure in the world of fashion, like Horace Walpole and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu; he was not even a scholar or a man of letters with intellectual friends, like Gray and Carlyle; still less had he been behind the great political curtain like Chesterfield, or travelled everywhere and been the talk of all the world like Byron. Nearly all his letters are written upon the most ordinary subjects to the most ordinary people, and written either from Olney, which was certainly a very dull place, or from Weston Underwood, which cannot have been a very lively one. And yet I doubt much if a volume so good and readable as Mr. Benham's *Selected Letters of Cowper* in the Golden Treasury Series could be made out of those of any one else. Not even Gray, I fancy, in spite

of the fascination of his character and the delicate charm of his humour, in spite of the combination of real learning with those high gifts of imagination and sensibility which make him a unique figure in the last century, has left so many letters likely to retain a permanent interest as Cowper. Gray's letters are delightful as is everything of his, but simply as letters they do not seem to me so perfect as Cowper's. Nor is the reason perhaps very hard to find. Other things being equal, of two writers or painters the one who has chosen the better subject will clearly succeed best. Now Cowper of all writers of letters has the best subject, because he has no subject at all. And so he is led into quiet gossiping self-revelation, little humorous touches about himself and his correspondents, the nothings that filled up their lives as they fill up ours, their likes and dislikes, their sayings and doings, their comings and goings. Human nature is always and everywhere of the same stuff, and the glimpses these letters give us of kind old Mrs. Unwin, and "my dearest Coz," Lady Hesketh, and "Mrs. Frog," and "Johnny" Johnson, and, fullest and best of all, of "your humble me, W. C.," can never lose their interest, because the human nature they show us is the same as we see around us every day, and as our sons and grandsons will see too when we have vanished in our turn as completely as Cowper and his friends. Not that of course mere accuracy is enough in drawing human nature,—that may be found—is found often enough—in the dulllest and most insipid novels; it is when the eye to see is found in company with the power of feeling life's joys and sorrows, and with the gift for telling the tale, that the books are written which never grow out of date. Few men have had these gifts more fully than Cowper, and it is a pity that he never wrote a novel. If he had done so, we might have the two sides of English middle-class life in the country and the country towns

drawn in one picture; the simple goodness of the immortal Vicar side by side with the delightful vanity and self-importance of Mrs. Bennett and Mrs. Allen. Perhaps, too, the creator of Sir Roger de Coverley might have found a successor; for Cowper recalls Addison on more than one point, in the quiet reserve which gives such charm to his humour, and in the delicacy of his touch as well as in the ease and purity of his English. Meanwhile the letters are the only substitute we have for the unwritten novel, and there could not be a better. It would not be easy to find a more charming exhibition of the novelist's gift of making us at once at home in the world to which he wishes to introduce us, than this little letter of Cowper's to his cousin, Lady Hesketh, before her first visit to him at Olney. We have only to read its few sentences, and we can hardly fail to carry away with us a fairly clear idea of what manner of man he was, a fairly true picture of him and his life and ways and surroundings, and, what is much more, a disposition to like him and sympathise with him, and a wish to know more of him. The novelist who can accomplish his introductory duties as well is a happy man; and certainly I cannot find anything which will serve better as an introduction both to Cowper and to his letters. Here it is.

And now, my dear, let me tell you once more that your kindness in promising us a visit has charmed us both. I shall see you again. I shall hear your voice. We shall take walks together. I will show you my prospects, the hovel, the alcove, the Ouse and its banks, everything that I have described. Talk not of an inn! Mention it not for your life! We have never had so many visitors but we could easily accommodate them all; though we have received Unwin, and his wife, and his sister, and his son, all at once. My dear, I will not let you come till the end of May, or beginning of June, because before that time my greenhouse will not be ready to receive us, and it is the only pleasant room belonging to us. When the plants go out, we go in. I line it with

mats, and spread the floor with mats; and there you shall sit with a bed of mignonette at your side, and a hedge of honeysuckles, roses, and jasmine; and I will make you a bouquet of myrtle every day. Sooner than the time I mention the country will not be in complete beauty; and I will tell you what you shall find at your first entrance. Imprimis, as soon as you have entered the vestibule, if you cast a look on either side of you, you shall see on the right hand a box of my making. It is the box in which have been lodged all my hares, and in which lodges Puss<sup>1</sup> at present. But he, poor fellow, is worn out with age and promises to die before you can see him. On the right hand stands a cupboard, the work of the same author; it was once a dove-cage, but I transformed it. Opposite to you stands a table, which I also made. But a merciless servant, having scrubbed it till it became paralytic, it serves no purpose now but of ornament; and all my clean shoes stand under it. On the left hand, at the farther end of this superb vestibule, you will find the door of the parlour, into which I will conduct you, and where I will introduce you to Mrs. Unwin, unless we should meet her before, and where we will be as happy as the day is long. Order yourself, my cousin, to the 'Swan' at Newport and there you shall find me ready to conduct you to Olney. My dear, I have told Homer what you say about casks and urns, and have asked him whether he is sure that it is a cask in which Jupiter keeps his wine. He swears that it is a cask, and that it will never be anything better than a cask to eternity. So if the god is content with it, we must even wonder at his taste, and be so too.—Adieu! my dearest, dearest cousin,—W. C.

Did ever poet's cousin have prettier welcome? There is nothing clever in the letter, nothing much to catch the eye or explain the fascination, and yet every time we read it we like it the better. Where does the charm lie? Perhaps in the choice and delicate English Cowper always employs; perhaps in the simple prettiness of the picture, or, it may be, in the perfect, if unconscious, firmness and delicacy with which it is executed; more likely still, perhaps, in the attraction exercised upon us by Cowper's own overflowing good nature which seems to

<sup>1</sup> Cowper's tame hare.

have an affectionate word not only for his cousin and his hares, but for everything about him down to the mignonette and the roses and the honeysuckle, and even the poor paralytic table.

This letter belongs to the happiest period of his life, the time one naturally goes to when one wishes to see him most himself. If we are to date him by a *floruit* after the fashion of the Greek and Latin poets, 1786, the year in which this letter was written, would be almost exactly his central year. But his letters are not confined to that happy time, and we can, if we like, almost follow him all through his life with their help. I have given a frontispiece, as it were, from his years of health and fame and quiet happiness; but we had better now go back to the beginning, and take things orderly as they come.

His life is broken into very simple divisions. He was born at Berkhamstead Rectory in 1731, went to school at Westminster, and entered at the Middle Temple in 1748. London was his home till 1763, when he first went out of his mind. He seems to have lived a pleasant enough life while in London, not much troubled with the law, but spending his time in a careless sort of fashion with young literary men like himself, among whom were Lloyd and Colman, and perhaps Churchill. Probably he was much like other young men who lived in the Temple in those days, when it was said of it: "The Temple is stocked with its peculiar beaux, wits, poets, critics, and every character in the gay world; and it is a thousand pities that so pretty a society should be disgraced with a few dull fellows who can submit to puzzle themselves with cases and reports." From 1763 to 1765 he was in an asylum; and it was there that, on recovering, he first received those strong religious impressions which coloured the rest of his life. He lived at Huntingdon from 1765 to 1767, most of the time with the Unwins, a clergyman's family with

whom he became very intimate. After Mr. Unwin's death in 1767, he and Mrs. Unwin moved to Olney, where they stayed till 1787. Here his poetry was mainly written, though his happiest days were probably those spent at Weston Underwood, a country village not far from Olney, to which Lady Hesketh persuaded them to move in 1787. There he stayed till 1795, and only left it because his terrible malady was so plainly returning that his young cousin, John Johnson, wished to have him with him in Norfolk where he could be always by his side. There he remained in different houses, but always in the same melancholy state, till the end came at Dereham in April 1800.

There are very few letters of the London period extant, but one of the few is so characteristic of Cowper and his easy, good-natured, sensible way of looking at life, that I must quote some of it. It is, if possible, truer and timelier in our day than it was in his; for there seems to be no more universally accepted doctrine nowadays than that the whole of life is to be absorbed in getting, or, equally often in unnecessarily increasing, the material means of life; no time being lost on life itself, in the higher meaning of the word. Cowper and Thurlow were in early years in the same attorney's office. Perhaps after all to us who look back on it now, the obscure and comparatively poor poet may seem to have got as much out of life as the Lord Chancellor! There may even be people bold enough to maintain that Cowper's life was better worth living than Thurlow's even if his poetry had been a failure.

But here is the letter or part of it:

If my resolution to be a great man was half so strong as it is to despise the shame of being a little one, I should not despair of a house in Lincoln's Inn Fields, with all its appurtenances: for there is nothing more certain, and I could prove it by a thousand instances, than that every man may be rich if he will. What is the industry of half the industrious men in the



world but avarice? and, call it by which name you will, it almost always succeeds. But this provokes me, that a covetous dog, who will work by candle-light in the morning to get what he does not want, shall be praised for his thriftiness, while a gentleman shall be abused for submitting to his wants, rather than work like an ass to relieve them. . . . Upon the whole, my dear Rowley, there is a degree of poverty that has no disgrace belonging to it; that degree of it, I mean, in which a man enjoys clean linen and good company; and, if I never sink below this degree of it, I care not if I never rise above it. This is a strange epistle, nor can I imagine how the devil I came to write it: but here it is, such as it is, and much good may you do with it.

There are naturally no letters while he was at St. Alban's, but they begin again as soon as he gets to Huntingdon. His experiences of keeping house for two persons are like other people's before and since:

DEAR JOE, [he is writing to Joseph Hill, who was his business adviser through life, and the best of friends beside].—Whatever you may think of the matter, it is no easy thing to keep house for two people. A man cannot always live upon sheep's heads and liver and lights, like the lions in the Tower; and a joint of meat in so small a family is an endless incumbrance. My butcher's bill for the last week amounted to four shillings and tenpence. I set off with a leg of lamb, and was forced to give part of it away to my washerwoman. Then I made an experience upon a sheep's heart, and that was too little. Next I put three pounds of beef into a pie, and this had like to have been too much, for it lasted three days, though my landlord was admitted to a share of it. Then as to small beer, I am puzzled to pieces about it. I have bought as much for a shilling as will serve us at least a month, and it is grown sour already. In short, I never knew how to pity poor housekeepers before: but now I cease to wonder at the politic cast which their occupation usually gives to their countenance, for it is really a matter full of perplexity.

Huntingdon must have seemed a quiet place after London, but Cowper seems to have settled down easily enough. "Here is a card assembly,"

he writes, "and a dancing assembly, and a horse race, and a club, and a bowling green,—so that I am well off, you perceive, in point of diversions; especially as I shall go to 'em just as much as I should if I lived a thousand miles off." The chief attraction to him was apparently the river. "The river Ouse,—I forget how they spell it—is the most agreeable circumstance in this part of the world: at this town it is, I believe, as wide as the Thames at Windsor: nor does the silver Thames better deserve that epithet, nor has it more flowers upon its banks, these being attributes, which, in strict truth, belong to neither. Fluellen would say, they are as like as my fingers to my fingers, and there is salmon in both. It is a noble stream to bathe in, and I shall make that use of it three times a week, having introduced myself to it for the first time this morning."

Having given bits from these letters to Hill, I ought not to omit what may be regarded as, in a certain sense, the other side of the picture. In the earnestness and enthusiasm of his new-born religious feelings, he had entered with the Unwins on a course of life which was very dangerous to one who had suffered as he had, and which indeed was not long in showing itself so. This is how they lived:

We breakfast commonly between eight and nine: till eleven we read either the Scripture, or the sermons of some faithful preacher of those holy mysteries: at eleven we attend Divine Service, which is performed here twice every day: and from twelve to three we separate and amuse ourselves as we please. During that interval I either read in my own apartment, or walk, or ride, or work in the garden. We seldom sit an hour after dinner: but, if the weather permits, adjourn to the garden, where, with Mrs. Unwin and her son, I have generally the pleasure of religious conversation till tea-time. If it rains, or is too windy for walking, we either converse within doors, or sing some hymns of Martin's collection: and, by the help of Mrs. Unwin's harpsichord, make up a tolerable concert, in which our hearts, I hope, are the best and most musical performers. After tea, we sally forth to walk



in good earnest. Mrs. Unwin is a good walker, and we have generally travelled about four miles before we see home again. At night we read and converse as before till supper, and commonly finish the evening either with hymns or a sermon, and last of all the family are called to prayers.

Well might Lady Hesketh say afterwards, with reference to days spent in similar fashion with Mr. Newton ; "to such a tender mind, and to such a wounded yet lively imagination, as our cousin's, I am persuaded that eternal praying and preaching was too much." There are, no doubt, many specially gifted spiritual natures who can literally obey the "Think of God more frequently than you breathe" of Epictetus, or the "Pray without ceasing" of St. Paul ; but they are the rare exceptions who combine the saints' love of God and sense of sin with an ease and cheerfulness of temperament which in any one else would be called Epicurean. The attempt to enforce such a life produces, if the first of the qualities be wanting, the cold and formal religion of the monk of the fifteenth century ; if the second be absent, as in Cowper's case, it produces melancholy or despair.

Less than a year after this letter was written Mr. Unwin died, and Cowper and Mrs. Unwin went to live at Olney. They stayed there nearly twenty years, and through Cowper's letters we are as well acquainted with their life there as if we had been their next door neighbours. His way of noting and describing all sorts of details and small matters, which other people would have passed over, makes our picture of the little house at Olney and its inhabitants as complete as an interior by Teniers or Ostade ; only fortunately the inhabitants are rather more attractive than the boors who are too often the only figures in Dutch pictures. A neat and careful gentleman of the eighteenth century like Cowper, particular about his wigs and buckles being of the fashionable shape, was not likely to crowd his canvas with the drunken ostlers and ploughmen of

Olney. His subjects are himself and his friends, and after them just the first thing beside, whatever it might be, that came into his head. Here is his theory of letter-writing :

MY DEAR FRIEND,—You like to hear from me : this is a very good reason why I should write. But I have nothing to say : this seems equally a good reason why I should not. Yet if you had alighted from your horse at our door this morning, and at this present writing, being five o'clock in the afternoon, had found occasion to say to me, 'Mr. Cowper, you have not spoke since I came in : have you resolved never to speak again ?' it would be but a poor reply if in answer to the summons I should plead inability as my best and only excuse. And this by the way suggests to me a seasonable piece of instruction, and reminds me of what I am very apt to forget, when I have any epistolary business in hand, that a letter may be written upon anything or nothing, just as that anything or nothing happens to occur. A man that has a journey before him twenty miles in length, which he is to perform on foot, will not hesitate and doubt whether he shall set out or not, because he does not readily conceive how he shall ever reach the end of it : for he knows that by the simple operation of moving one foot forward first, and then the other, he shall be sure to accomplish it. So it is in the present case, and so it is in every similar case. A letter is written as a conversation is maintained, or a journey performed : not by preconcerted or premeditated means, a new contrivance or an invention never heard of before,—but merely by maintaining a progress, and resolving as a postilion does having once set out, never to stop till we reach the appointed end. If a man may talk without thinking, why may he not write upon the same terms ? A grave gentleman of the last century, a tie-wig, square-toe, Steinkirk figure would say—'My good Sir, a man has no right to do either.' But it is to be hoped that the present century has nothing to do with the mouldy opinions of the last : and so, good Sir Launcelot, or Sir Paul or whatever be your name, step into your picture frame again, and leave us moderns to think when we can and to write whether we can or not, else we might as well be dead as you are.

The difficulty in writing about letters is that to illustrate one must quote ;

and then, as the charm of letters lies, or ought to lie, in the large, the quotation of a line or two, which is often enough in poetry, does not do justice to the letter-writer, and we have to quote nearly in full—which again demands a magnificent disregard of considerations of space. However, this letter which I have just been giving, seemed to me to have nearly irresistible claims, for not only is it the best account of Cowper's ideas about writing letters, but it is less accessible than many others. Mr. Benham, who has got most of the best letters in his selection, has left this one out.

Cowper's letters are generally characterised by a sort of careless, easy inevitableness, but he could go out of his way to *make* a letter sometimes. Here is a bit of rhyming *tour de force* sent to Mr. Newton. Its subject is his first volume of poems, and it is curious to note how, for all its cleverness, it remains a perfect letter with the true Janus-face looking back to the writer and on to the recipient; the rhyme is just the sort of joke Cowper liked; the careful explanation that the poems were written "in hopes to do good" is as plainly the Newtonian part of the affair. It begins, "My very dear friend, I am going to send, what when you have read, you may scratch your head, and say, I suppose, there's nobody knows, whether what I have got, be verse or not,—by the tune and the time, it ought to be rhyme; but if it be, did you ever see, of late or of yore, such a ditty before?" This sort of thing is kept up all through the letter and then he ends up: "I have heard before, of a room with a floor, laid upon springs, and such like things, with so much art, in every part, that when you went in, you was forced to begin a minuet pace, with an air and a grace, swimming about, now in and now out, with a deal of state, in a figure of eight, without pipe or string, or any such thing; and now I have writ, in a rhyming fit, what will make you

dance, and as you advance, will keep you still, though against your will, dancing away, alert and gay, till you come to an end of what I have penned; which that you may do, ere Madam and you are quite worn out with jigging about, I take my leave, and here you receive a bow profound, down to the ground, from your humble me, W. C."

A letter like this is worth giving, because it is probably unique in the annals of the art; but it is the less striking letters that are really more characteristic of Cowper. The best are those which we hardly notice the first time we read them, but like better every time we take them up. One of the most charming of the letters from Olney is the second he wrote to Lady Hesketh when John Gilpin had induced her to begin their old correspondence again. This is how he ends it:

I have not answered many things in your letter, nor can do it at present for want of room. I cannot believe but that I should know you, notwithstanding all that time may have done. There is not a feature of your face, could I meet it upon the road by itself, that I should not instantly recollect. I should say, that is my cousin's nose, or those are her lips and her chin, and no woman upon earth can claim them but herself. As for me, I am a very smart youth of my years. I am not indeed grown gray so much as I am grown bald. No matter. There was more hair in the world than ever had the honour to belong to me. Accordingly, having found just enough to curl a little at my ears, and to intermix with a little of my own that still hangs behind, I appear, if you see me in an afternoon, to have a very decent head-dress, not easily distinguished from my natural growth: which being worn with a small bag, and a black ribbon about my neck, continues to me the charms of my youth, even at the verge of age. Away with the fear of writing too often. Yours my dearest cousin, W. C.

P.S. That the view I give you of myself may be complete, I add the two following items, that I am in debt to nobody, and that I grow fat.

But perhaps the most inimitable and delightful of all Cowper's epis-

tolary virtues is his power of telling stories. Everybody has felt how little power the ordinary story-teller, whether on paper or in conversation, has of making us go with him, and see the thing as he sees it. Cowper's stories are as alive for us as they were for his friends. Take for instance this little account of a country election in the old days :

We were sitting yesterday after dinner, the two ladies and myself, very composedly, and without the least apprehension of any such intrusion, in our snug parlour, one lady knitting, the other netting, and the gentleman winding worsted, when, to our unspeakable surprise, a mob appeared before the window, a smart rap was heard at the door, the boys hallooed, and the maid announced Mr. Grenville. Puss was unfortunately let out of her box, so that the candidate, with all his good friends at his heels, was refused admittance at the grand entry, and referred to the back door, as the only possible way of approach. Candidates are creatures not very susceptible of affronts, and would rather, I suppose, climb in at a window than be absolutely excluded. In a minute, the yard, the kitchen, and the parlour were filled. Mr. Grenville, advancing towards me, shook me by the hand with a degree of cordiality that was extremely seducing. As soon as he, and as many more as could find chairs were seated, he began to open the intent of his visit. I told him I had no vote, for which he readily gave me credit. I assured him I had no influence, which he was not equally inclined to believe, and the less, no doubt, because Mr. Ashburner, the drapier, addressing himself to me at that moment, informed me that I had a great deal. Supposing that I could not be possessed of such a treasure without knowing it, I ventured to confirm my first assertion by saying that if I had any I was utterly at a loss to imagine where it could be, or wherein it consisted. Thus ended the conference. Mr. Grenville squeezed me by the hand again, kissed the ladies, and withdrew. He kissed likewise the maid in the kitchen, and seemed upon the whole a most loving, kissing, kind-hearted gentleman.

There are very few pictures of life in the last century where the figures stand out of the canvas so clear, direct, and natural, with their own

personality about them as they do here. And how charmingly Cowper's humour lights up the whole picture ! He is always amusing about himself and his own importance, and gives us a number of little touches on the subject which are worth noting. He had no poetic contempt for personal adornment ; when his friend Unwin is going up to town, he writes to him : " My head will be 'obliged to you for a hat, of which I enclose a string that gives you the circumference. The depth of the crown must be four inches and one eighth. Let it not be a round slouch, which I abhor, but a smart, well-cocked, fashionable affair."

His fame too, when it came, amused him very much, and he is never tired of joking about it. " I cannot help adding a circumstance that will divert you. Martin [an innkeeper] having learned from Sam whose servant he was, told him that he had never seen Mr. Cowper, but he had heard him frequently spoken of by the companies that had called at his house, and therefore when Sam would have paid for his breakfast, would take nothing from him. Who says that fame is only empty breath ! On the contrary it is good ale and cold beef into the bargain." So again, and neither of these are given by Mr. Benham who, no doubt, could not find room for all the good things,—" I have been tickled with some douceurs of a very flattering nature by the post. A lady unknown addresses the best of men ;—an unknown gentleman has read my inimitable poems, and invites me to his seat in Hampshire—another incognito gives me hopes of a memorial in his garden, and a Welsh attorney sends me his verses to revise, and obligingly asks,

' Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,  
Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale ?'

" If you find me a little vain hereafter, my friend, you must excuse it, in consideration of these powerful incentives, especially the latter : for

surely the poet who can charm an attorney, especially a Welsh one, must be at least an Orpheus, if not something greater." And he tells Lady Hesketh: "I have received an anonymous complimentary Pindaric Ode from a little poet who calls himself a schoolboy. I send you the first stanza by way of specimen.

To William Cowper, of the Inner Temple, Esq. of his poems in the second volume.

'In what high strains, my Muse, wilt thou Attempt great Cowper's worth to show? Pindaric strains shall tune the lyre,

And 'twould require

A Pindar's fire

To sing great Cowper's worth,  
The lofty bard, delightful sage,  
Ever the wonder of the age,  
And blessing to the earth.'

"Adieu, my precious cousin, your lofty bard and delightful sage expects you with all possible affection."

But we are getting now, indeed have already got, so far as some of the letters I have been quoting are concerned, into the Weston Underwood period of the poet's life, where he is at his happiest and best, enjoying his success and fame, and the many friendships, both old, re-opened and new discovered, which his fame brought him, busy at his Homer with a fixed quantity to translate every day, so that he always writes in "Homer hurry,"—a kind of hurry which somehow produces the most lazy, delightful letters—occupied and amused, in fact, in such a fashion that his melancholy found no loophole to get in by till Homer was finished and despatched, Mrs. Unwin aging every day and often suffering, and only the uncongenial task of editing Milton was there to save him from himself. We will not follow him there, except in sympathy; indeed, after a very few more specimens of his "divine chit-chat," as Coleridge called it, we must take our leave of him altogether, and bring this paper to an end. I have given one specimen of his story-telling powers. Here is another, this time to Mrs. Throck-

morton, the wife of the Squire of Weston Underwood:

MY DEAR MRS. FROG,—You have by this time (I presume) heard from the Doctor, whom I desired to present to you our best affections, and to tell you that we are well. He sent an urchin (I do not mean a hedgehog, commonly called an urchin in old times, but a boy, commonly so called at present), expecting that he would find you at Bucklands, whither he supposed you gone on Thursday. He sent him charged with divers articles, and among others with letters, or, at least, with a letter: which I mention that, if the boy should be lost together with his despatches, past all possibility of recovery, you may yet know that the Doctor stands acquitted of not writing. That he is utterly lost (that is to say, the boy, for the Doctor being the last antecedent, as the grammarians say, you might otherwise suppose that he was intended) is the more probable, because he was never four miles from his home before, having only travelled at the side of a plough-team: and when the Doctor gave him his direction to Bucklands, he asked, very naturally, if that place was in England. So what has become of him Heaven knows! I do not know that any adventures have presented themselves since your departure worth mentioning, except that the rabbit that infested your Wilderness has been shot for devouring your carnations; and that I myself have been in some danger of being devoured in like manner by a great dog, namely, Pearson's. But I wrote him a letter on Friday informing him that unless he tied up his great mastiff in the daytime, I would send him a worse thing, commonly called and known by the name of an attorney. When I go forth to ramble in the fields I do not sally, like Don Quixote, with a purpose of encountering monsters, if any such can be found: but am a peaceable poor gentleman, and a poet, who means nobody any harm, the fox hunters and the two Universities of this land excepted. I cannot learn from any creature whether the Turnpike Bill is alive or dead: so ignorant am I, and by such ignoramuses surrounded. But if I know little else, this at least I know, that I love you and Mr. Frog: that I long for your return, and that I am, with Mrs. Unwin's best affections, Ever yours, W. C.

I am afraid I am showing the magnificent disregard of considerations of space of which I spoke just now, but



the temptation to give this letter in full was too great; it has always seemed to me so perfectly easy and charming, and it gives a delightful glimpse into the happiness of those early days at Weston and the pleasant intimacy that existed between the Lodge and the Hall. The Lodge wrote complimentary verses to the Hall, and the Hall (in the person of Mrs. Throckmorton and her Roman Catholic chaplain, the *Padre* of whom Cowper got very fond), transcribed the Lodge's translation of Homer; Cowper and Mrs. Unwin dined constantly with the "Frogs" and the "Frogs" occasionally with them, and altogether life seems to have passed very agreeably. Poor Cowper got into trouble for it with Mr. Newton, who did not like Roman Catholics, and kept a careful watch over his flock; but the poet could stand on his dignity when he pleased, and he would not give up his new friends; and as the *Padre* did not apparently even attempt a conversion, no harm came of it.

The two most important of the friendships Cowper made in the latter part of his life were those with Hayley, who was afterwards his biographer, and with his young cousin John Johnson, who took charge of him during his melancholy closing years, and proved himself in every way unwearied in his devotion. He was a Cambridge undergraduate when his cousin first made his acquaintance, and his high spirits and good nature made Cowper take to him at once. The poet liked to get him to Weston for his vacations, and he seems to have brightened everybody up when he stayed there. The letters to him are nearly always bright and cheerful. Here is one of the last of the really happy ones. It is headed "Io Pæan!"

MY DEAREST JOHNNY,—Even as you foretold, so it came to pass. On Tuesday I received your letter, and on Tuesday came the pheasants: for which I am indebted in many thanks, as well as Mrs. Unwin, both to your kindness, and to your kind friend Mr. Copeman.

In Copeman's ear this truth let Echo tell,—  
Immortal bards like mortal pheasants well.  
And when his clerkship's out, I wish him  
herds

Of golden clients for his golden birds.

Our friends the Courtenays have never dined with us since their marriage, *because* we have never asked them: and we have never asked them *because* poor Mrs. Unwin is not so equal to the task of providing for and entertaining company as before this last illness. But this is no objection to the arrival here of a bustard: rather it is a cause for which we shall be particularly glad to see the monster. It will be a handsome present to *them*. So let the bustard come, as the Lord Mayor of London said to the hare, when he was hunting,—'Let her come, a' God's name, I am not afraid of her.' Adieu my dear cousin and caterer—My eyes terribly bad, else I had much more to say to you."

Not very long after this letter was written, Mrs. Unwin's health of body and mind entirely broke down, and her affection, which had so long been the greatest of blessings to Cowper, became all at once the very reverse, for she insisted on his spending his days in her room, reading to her and writing for her—occupations which had always tried him; and as she could hardly speak, and he was thrown in this way entirely on her society, he naturally relapsed into the old melancholy. Lady Hesketh found him in 1794 in a terrible state of insanity, refusing food, walking incessantly up and down his room, filled with the most awful imaginations. Then they took him to Norfolk in the next year and unhappily he lived on till April 25th, 1800. The despair lasted up to the moment of death; but it is consoling, as well as curious, to know, that from that moment "the expression with which his countenance settled was that of calmness and composure, mingled, as it were, with holy surprise." And certainly, as Southey says, "never was there a burial at which the mourners might, with more sincerity of feeling, give their hearty thanks to Almighty God, that it had pleased Him to deliver the departed

out of the miseries of this sinful world."

Cowper's letters are so perfectly easy and simple and sincere that we can enjoy them in whatever mood we may happen to be, just as we can always enjoy *Guy Mannering* or *Emma*. And we enjoy them simply for their own sake. Half the interest of Lord Chesterfield's letters lies in what may be called his philosophy of life; Horace Walpole is at least as important from the point of view of the student of social and political history as from that of the lover of letters, and Gray too has a great deal to tell us which would be interesting and important in a book. The great merit of Cowper in this line is that he is not a philosopher, or a politician, or a scholar, but simply and solely a writer of letters. He has no extraneous claims on our interest,

and indeed he became one of the best, if not the very best, of English letter-writers by simply not trying to become anything else. No one but Gray, and perhaps Lamb, has anything like his delicacy of style and humour, and Gray, at any rate, is not generally so spontaneous as Cowper. Never were letters written with less idea of publication. He destroyed all he received, and asked his correspondents to do the same with his. The letters would never have been published but for the success of the poems; but it is possible that there are many people now who are tempted to renew their forgotten acquaintance with Cowper as a poet by learning from his letters how delightful he was as a man.

J. C. BAILEY.



## PHILANTHROPY AND THE POOR-LAW.

"CAN any charity come out of a Board of Guardians?" is a question likely to rouse as much scorn as a parallel question about Nazareth. Guardians have never escaped the reproaches levelled at them in *Oliver Twist*. Public opinion condemns them as the hard and official protectors of "Bumble," and by Mr. Booth's preachers the Poor-Law is often made matter for scorn. The Report of the Whitechapel Guardians just published makes therefore strange reading. Its table of contents shows that the Guardians, in addition to their ordinary administration of the Infirmary and Workhouse, deal with Rescue Work, Children's Country Holidays, Emigration, Foreign Immigration, Protection of Children, and Winter Distress. It will be seen that their work is such as cannot be left out of consideration in any scheme for helping the poor, and it raises the question whether the Poor-Law must not be the foundation on which any such scheme is based.

With regard, for example, to Rescue Work, there is no Shelter in London so large as that afforded by the Workhouse. It is here that women come when the Shelters raised by some wave of passing emotion fail. It is here at some period or other of their lives that the greater number of the poor fallen men and women seek refuge. On this subject the Guardians say: "Those who best know the East End of London, best know how patiently and successfully the organised work of social rescue has been through long years carried on, and how unjust it would be now to measure its results by the extent to which they are publicly paraded, or to assume that the degraded and miserable are submerged and uncared for. In this connection

it may be stated that in the Whitechapel Workhouse, the efforts of the matron alone during the past year have resulted in placing upon their feet, and introducing into respectable service, forty-three female paupers. This fact needs no comment, while it is to be observed that it is additional to the excellent work carried on by the lady visitors." This fact, which needs no comment, and the other fact as to the co-operation of the lady visitors, show that there is a steady direction of friendly effort against the inroads of vice. No agency in this field can claim great success. It seems as if it needed all the love and all the time of one woman to raise one other woman. No system is successful, and many systems absorb much thought and money merely to keep them going. The Guardians have rooms, agents, nurses and doctors; they have a machinery which is always in order and always at work. Alongside of this machinery they have the service of devoted women who visit the wards, make friends of the women, and send them out to work with the memory of a love which is both strong and kind. Vice is vice, and that pity which has in it no element of indignation will not really touch the wrong-doer. A weak spot in much of the Rescue Work is its tendency to substitute pity for mercy, and to treat the sinner so as to make her minimise her sin. They who thus work may attract large numbers to their Shelters: they do catch sometimes the feebler natures; but they alienate the stronger, who want sympathy in their own self-condemnation as much as they want it in their aspirations after a better life. The Guardians, who offer on the one hand the discipline of the House, and on the other the

service of a friend, have a charity which is more like His who on occasions could be angry and who sternly taught that for every idle word an account would be required.

Children's Country Holidays is almost the latest pet object of the charitable. Good ladies have funds called after their own names, and they rival one another in their efforts to give poor children a fortnight's fresh air. The Guardians have not lagged behind in this forward movement, and they have sent a party of children from their schools to enjoy holidays in the homes of cottagers living in the open country. In their necessarily formal language they speak of "the physical, mental and moral advantage to be derived from the fortnight's stay," but it is easy to imagine something of what lies behind that language. How the child prim and proper, drilled and clean, stiff from the great district school at Forest Gate, must have revelled in the freedom of cottage life! How interesting must have been the ways of the family, how awakening the varied sights; how the mind and heart must have responded to new calls; how many memories must have been left to influence in after years the choice for a country life as against a life in town! The Guardians who gave this "physical, mental and moral advantage" are certainly not to be omitted in a list of charitable agencies.

Emigration is another object undertaken by rival Societies which in the Report receives quiet and reasonable notice. In a short paragraph it is stated that with the consent of the High Commissioner such and such persons have been settled in Canada, and reports follow showing that previous emigrants are doing well. The charity of the act is as the charity of the rival Societies. Miss A. and Mr. B., who advertise their work and collect large subscriptions, have done no more than the Guardians of Whitechapel have done; but it is

questionable if any of the voluntary Societies could give so adequate and complete a record of each individual emigrated. There is an obvious danger in this sort of charity. It is so easy to take the unknown for the successful, and to think that because the poor are out of sight, they are therefore out of need. The sanguine and impatient temper of the philanthropist is hardly to be trusted in a matter where results are so far out of reach, and his supporters are too glad to hear of success to make any enquiries. The calm and official notice of the Guardians may therefore be even a better guarantee of the charity which *considereth* the poor than the warm and glowing generalities of charitable agencies. Service "with a quiet mind" is the service often wanted in those who serve the poor.

Foreign Immigration is a matter which is now rousing heated feeling. In the name of charity it has been urged that, "This is the agency which reduces the price of labour below its fair level, which renders effective combination among the sweated classes impossible, and which drives many Englishmen from their own country to seek a livelihood in some distant land, so that while foreign paupers are landing every day on these shores, Englishmen are being forced out to make room for them." And in the name of the same charity the feelings of the poor have been roused against the foreigner whose habits are different and whose poverty absorbs benevolence. Sometimes it is almost made to seem as if the one thing necessary to raise the poor of East London was the exclusion of the foreigner. The Whitechapel Guardians have gone into the matter and, in the spirit of the Scientific Charity inaugurated by Mr. Charles Booth, have looked at facts. It has been found that three-fourths of the Jews in England are in London, and two-thirds of this number in Whitechapel, and that in Whitechapel only thirteen per cent. of the population are

aliens. Further, it has been found that of the seven hundred and eighty-eight indoor paupers only eight are tailors, nineteen shoemakers, and four cabinet-makers,—the trades chiefly affected by alien immigrants. "The statistics," says the Report, "of pauperism within the Whitechapel Union do not enable us to affirm with any positiveness that the burdens of the ratepayers have to any material extent been increased by the incursion of foreign poor into the district." Here are two voices. The voice of Charity calls us to shut out the naked and the hungry and the stranger; it makes his destitution a charge, and works on the selfishness of his fellow-workmen to oppress him still further. The voice of Officialism says, "The poor foreigner is not the plague you think him to be; he does not steal as you think he steals; he is at any rate a man, and he can be raised. Go on calmly. Deal with him as with your own fellow-citizens and raise his standard of living." Surely there is some confusion in these voices, and it is Charity which speaks in the name of Officialism.

One of the saddest of modern revelations is the cruelty which children endure at the hands of their parents. It is a national disgrace that it should be necessary to found a National Society for preventing cruelty to children. Under the banner of that Society, ardent men and women have been enlisted, and as yet their zeal seems to have given few signs of flagging or of extravagance. The Guardians by their works deserve also to be enrolled among the protectors of children. They have done the duty effectively. A recent Act of Parliament gives them power to adopt a child deserted by its parents and to keep it, if a boy until the age of sixteen, and if a girl until the age of eighteen. The Whitechapel Guardians have during the year used the power so as to take twenty-seven children under their care. These twenty-seven children drawn from the common lodging-

houses and furnished rooms which are the disgrace of a small area in the Whitechapel Union, may be boarded out in country cottages, where under the care of some motherly woman they will be trained in loving and in enjoying. The process in its first stages is so protected that there can be no abuses either through the over-eagerness of the charitable or the changeableness of the poor. There can be no writs of Habeas Corpus to put an end to good work or to shake men's faith in the honest intentions of the philanthropist. In its latter stages the supervision is no less sustained and careful. The adopted child will not, because its first friends are too busy or have died, become a slave-servant or be allowed to begin life unbefriended. The Guardians have a machinery which reaches far, and having put a heart into the machine they are able to do effectively that which charity tries and often fails to do.

The winter distress brought into operation a new army of helpers. The tale of their campaign has been written in glowing language, and the world which has heard the tale has been at once shocked by the evidence of distress and comforted by the thought that at least something has been done. Whitechapel has naturally been ground chosen for the operations of the army of helpers. Its reputation, the presence in its midst of so many who are wretched and destitute, has led to the establishment of many shelters, workshops and mission rooms. Within the radius of one quarter of a mile there are, it is said, no less than fifty centres of charitable work. Among the resources available for dealing with Winter Distress the Guardians are rarely counted, but this Report shows that they are not only familiar with the condition of the district, but also that they have thoughtfully dealt with its distress. They tell how, addressing the District Board of Works, they expressed readiness to co-operate in the direction of "Recommending for employment those who from their pre-

vious circumstances and conditions it is most desirable should not be placed under the necessity of receiving relief at the cost of the rates. At the same time, the Guardians disavowed any desire or intention to ask the District Board to do more than aid them in dealing with the front rank of resident heads of families, of good character, whose homes are worth preserving and therefore the conditions precedent to a recommendation to the District Board would be an honest, industrious character, a willingness to work, a *bond fide* residence in the district of at least six months, and the possession of a decent home." The language is not the language of charitable reports; but those who recognise that the best relief is that which considers the poor and respects the desire to work rather than to beg,—a desire which is not dead in any one—will acknowledge that the methods of the Guardians are inspired by the spirit of true charity. This enquiry into circumstances, this steady offer of help to those who themselves have made an effort, has been going on regularly; and the Guardians, like the Cardinal in Browning's play, reflecting on the various spasmodic attempts to suddenly right what is wrong, may say, "We have known four and twenty leaders of revolt." Probably if the Cardinal and they could speak their minds, they would say that it is these "revolts," these sudden attempts by means of Mansion House Funds, Salvation Army schemes, and rival charities, which hinder the operation of methods founded on knowledge and carried out with regularity. At the same time, as may be gathered from the tables and statistics at the end of the Report, the Guardians welcome the co-operation of charitable workers. One table tells how two hundred and forty-five families have been assisted by ways and means not at the disposal of the Guardians. Many have received grants of money, large or small, with which to buy tools or get clear of debt; many have received pensions, many have been

found situations. Another table tells how the service of ladies has been enlisted to befriend girls who have been placed out in the world. A few dry figures and a few short sentences tell the history of thirty-five girls under twenty years of age. Those who know the facts know how much lies behind these short sentences, the many visits and the hearty sympathy which enables for instance the lady who visited J. S. to say she "has been nearly four years in this her first place and doing very well,—is stronger than she was, but still requires much care." If in many cases the ladies' report is sad, while the first thought of the reader must be "How refreshing to get truthfulness," the second must be a reflection on the system of big schools which costing the Guardians about thirteen shillings a week for each child sends out thirty-five girls of whom only four can be said to be doing "very satisfactorily" and only eleven "satisfactorily." Large Charity Schools give other returns of their own work, but their returns have not to be submitted to the impartial scrutiny of officials.

The Whitechapel Guardians do not in the present Report dwell at length upon what they have done and are doing in the ordinary administration of the Poor-Law Relief. It is only between the lines that it can be read how they have practically abolished out-relief, substituting for the necessarily hard hand of the Relieving officer, the soft touch of the charitable visitor, how they have made the Infirmary a rival to the Hospital by efficient nursing and pleasant surroundings, and how the workhouse is in fact an Industrial School wherein a man or woman may, if they will, learn what is useful. At the same time the language of the Report is such that no one reading it will think that all is done that is possible. Their work is in the Guardians' estimation far from perfect. Some changes are wanted in the law. Their buildings being old-fashioned require constant alteration, and for want of adequate support

their efforts have somewhat the nature of experiments. In almost every paragraph it is possible to read an appeal for help directed to those whose will to help the poor is strong enough to endure control.

The union of voluntary and official charity is the striking feature in the system of the Whitechapel Guardians. In this union there seems to be equal gain to each. It is a marriage in which each supplies what the other lacks. Voluntary charity gains "backbone," it becomes strong and regular. Official charity gains delicacy of touch, the power of adapting itself to individual needs.

If the union were complete, if all the force of voluntary charity now thrown into Whitechapel were brought into union with the official charity of the Guardians, it is possible that the dreams of some reformers would be realised. Then it might be that relief would go to those whom relief would help, and punishment to those whom punishment would help. Then it might be that those who are helped and those who are punished should

alike feel the friendship of a fellow-man or a fellow-woman willing to share their sorrow and their hope. Then it might be that the Workhouse would cease to be a degradation, and be deterrent only by being educational. The Report of the Whitechapel Guardians shows that the official administration is strong, and that it is willing to accept the co-operation of voluntary charity. Other reports show that voluntary charity is also strong. With whom does it lie to make the union between them complete?

A Board of Guardians has admitted people of good will into its counsels, it has adopted a policy framed in consideration for the needs of the poor, and it has welcomed the help of those who love the poor. If charity will submit to be restrained by experience, to surrender will-worship and to work within limits; if charity will be regular and give up short cuts to large ends; if charity will be content to drop its party watch-words and work under a common flag, then it may be that help which is both human and strong will be brought to raise the poor.



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1. The first part of the document is a list of names and titles, including "The Hon. Mr. Justice" and "The Hon. Mr. Justice".

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# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

DECEMBER, 1891.

## A FIRST FAMILY OF TASAJARA.

BY BRET HARTE.

### CHAPTER XI.

"READERS of *The Clarion* will have noticed that allusion has been frequently made in these columns to certain rumours concerning the early history of Tasajara which were supposed to affect the pioneer record of Daniel Harcourt. It was deemed by the conductors of this journal to be only consistent with the fearless and independent duty undertaken by *The Clarion* that these rumours should be fully chronicled as part of the information required by the readers of a first-class newspaper, unbiassed by any consideration of the social position of the parties, but simply as a matter of news. For this *The Clarion* does not deem it necessary to utter a word of apology. But for that editorial comment or attitude which the proprietors felt was justified by the reliable sources of their information they now consider it only due in honour to themselves, their readers, and Mr. Harcourt to fully and freely apologise. A patient and laborious investigation enables them to state that the alleged facts published by *The Clarion* and copied by other journals are utterly unsupported by testimony, and the charges—although more or less vague—which were based upon them are equally untenable. We are now satisfied that one 'Elijah Curtis,' a former pioneer of Tasajara who disappeared five years ago, and was

supposed to be drowned, has not only made no claim to the Tasajara property, as alleged, but has given no sign of his equally alleged resuscitation and present existence, and that on the minutest investigation there appears nothing either in his disappearance, or the transfer of his property to Daniel Harcourt, that could in any way disturb the uncontested title to Tasajara or the unimpeachable character of its present owner. The whole story now seems to have been the outcome of one of those stupid rural hoaxes too common in California."

"Well," said Mrs. Ashwood laying aside *The Clarion* with a sceptical shrug of her pretty shoulders, as she glanced up at her brother. "I suppose this means that you are going to propose again to the young lady?"

"I have," said Jack Shipley; "that's the worst of it—and got my answer before this came out."

"Jack!" said Mrs. Ashwood, thoroughly surprised,

"Yes! You see, Conny, as I told you three weeks ago, she said she wanted time to consider—that she scarcely knew me, and all that! Well, I thought it wasn't exactly a gentleman's business to seem to stand off after that last attack on her father, and so, last week, I went down to San José where she was staying and begged her not to keep me in suspense. And, by Jove! she froze me with a look,

and said that with these aspersions on her father's character, she preferred not to be under obligations to any one."

"And you believed her?"

"Oh hang it all! Look here, Conny—I wish you'd just try for once to find out some good in that family, besides what that sentimental young widower John Milton may have. You seem to think because they've quarrelled with *him* there isn't a virtue left among them."

Far from seeming to offer any suggestion of feminine retaliation, Mrs. Ashwood smiled sweetly. "My dear Jack, I have no desire to keep you from trying your luck again with Miss Clementina, if that's what you mean, and indeed I shouldn't be surprised if a family who felt a *mésalliance* as sensitively as the Harcourts felt that affair of their son's, would be as keenly alive to the advantages of a good match for their daughter. As to young Mr. Harcourt, he never talked to me of the vices of his family, nor has he lately troubled me much with the presence of his own virtues. I haven't heard from him since we came here."

"I suppose he is satisfied with the Government berth you got for him," returned her brother drily.

"He was very grateful to Senator Flynn, who appreciates his talents,—but who offered it to him as a mere question of fitness," replied Mrs. Ashwood with great precision of statement. "But you don't seem to know he declined it on account of his other work."

"Preferred his old Bohemian ways, eh? You can't change those fellows, Conny. They can't get over the fascinations of vagabondage. Sorry your lady-patroness scheme didn't work. Pity you couldn't have promoted him in the line of his profession, as the Grand Duchess of Girolstein did Fritz."

"For Heaven's sake, Jack, go to Clementina! You may not be successful, but there at least the perfect gentle-

manliness and good taste of your illustrations will not be thrown away."

"I think of going to San Francisco to-morrow anyway," returned Jack with affected carelessness. "I'm getting rather bored with this wild seaside watering-place and its glitter of ocean and hopeless background of mountain. It's nothing to me that 'there's no land nearer than Japan' out there. It may be very healthful to the tissues but it's weariness to the spirit, and I don't see why we can't wait at San Francisco till the rains send us further south, as well as here."

He had walked to the balcony of their sitting-room in the little seaside hotel where this conversation took place, and gazed discontentedly over the curving bay and sandy shore before him. After a slight pause Mrs. Ashwood stepped out beside him.

"Very likely I may go with you," she said with a perceptible tone of weariness. "We will see after the post arrives."

"By the way, there is a little package for you in my room that came this morning. I brought it up, but forgot to give it to you. You'll find it on my table."

Mrs. Ashwood abstractedly turned away and entered her brother's room from the same balcony. The forgotten parcel, which looked like a roll of manuscript, was lying on his dressing-table. She gazed attentively at the handwriting on the wrapper and then gave a quick glance around her. A sudden and subtle change came over her. She neither flushed nor paled, nor did the delicate lines of expression in her face quiver or change. But as she held the parcel in her hand her whole being seemed to undergo some exquisite suffusion. As the medicines which the Arabian physician had concealed in the hollow handle of the mallet permeated the languid royal blood of Persia, so some volatile balm of youth seemed to flow in upon her with the contact of that strange mis-sive and transform her weary spirit.

"Jack!" she called in a high clear voice.

But Jack had already gone from the balcony, when she reached it with an elastic step and a quick youthful swirl and rustling of her skirt. He was lighting his cigar in the garden.

"Jack," she said, leaning half over the railing, "come back here in an hour and we'll talk over that matter of yours again."

Jack looked up eagerly and as if he might even come up then, but she added quickly, "In about an hour—I must think it over," and withdrew.

She re-entered the sitting room, shut the door carefully and locked it, half pulled down the blind, walking once or twice around the table on which the parcel lay, with one eye on it like a graceful cat. Then she suddenly sat down, took it up with a grave practical face, examined the postmark curiously, and opened it with severe deliberation. It contained a manuscript and a letter of four closely written pages. She glanced at the manuscript with bright approving eyes, ran her fingers through its leaves and then laid it carefully and somewhat ostentatiously on the table beside her. Then, still holding the letter in her hand, she rose and glanced out of the window at her bored brother lounging towards the beach and at the heaving billows beyond, and returned to her seat. This apparently important preliminary concluded, she began to read.

There were, as already stated, four blessed pages of it! All vital, earnest, palpitating with youthful energy, preposterous in premises, precipitate in conclusions—yet irresistible and convincing to every woman in their illogical sincerity. There was not a word of love in it, yet every page breathed a wholesome adoration; there was not an epithet or expression that a greater prude than Mrs. Ashwood would have objected to, yet every sentence seemed to end in a caress. There was not a line of poetry in it, and scarcely a figure or simile, and yet it was poetical.

Boyishly egotistic as it was in attitude, it seemed to be written less *of* himself than *to* her; in its delicate because unconscious flattery, it made her at once the provocation and excuse. And yet so potent was its individuality that it required no signature. No one but John Milton Harcourt could have written it. His personality stood out of it so strongly that once or twice Mrs. Ashwood almost unconsciously put up her little hand before her face with a half mischievous, half deprecating smile, as if the big honest eyes of its writer were upon her.

It began by an elaborate apology for declining the appointment offered him by one of her friends, which he was bold enough to think had been prompted by her kind heart. That was like her, but yet what she might do to any one; and he preferred to think of her as the sweet and gentle lady who had recognised his merit without knowing him, rather than the powerful and gracious benefactress who wanted to reward him when she did know him. The crown that she had all unconsciously placed upon his head that afternoon at the little hotel at Crystal Spring was more to him than the Senator's appointment; perhaps he was selfish, but he could not bear that she who had given so much should believe that he could accept a lesser gift. All this and much more! Some of it he had wanted to say to her in San Francisco at times when they had met, but he could not find the words. But she had given him the courage to go on and do the only thing he was fit for, and he had resolved to stick to that, and perhaps do something once more that might make him hear again her voice as he had heard it that day, and again see the light that had shone in her eyes as she sat there and read. And this was why he was sending her a manuscript. She might have forgotten that she had told him a strange story of her cousin who had disappeared—which she thought he might at some time work up. Here it was. Per-



haps she might not recognise it again, in the way he had written it here; perhaps she did not really mean it when she had given him permission to use it—but he remembered her truthful eyes and believed her—and in any event it was hers to do with what she liked. It had been a great pleasure for him to write it and think that she would see it; it was like seeing her himself—that was in *his better self*—more worthy the companionship of a beautiful and noble woman than the poor young man she would have helped. This was why he had not called the week before she went away. But for all that, she had made his life less lonely, and he should be ever grateful to her. He could never forget how she unconsciously sympathised with him that day over the loss that had blighted his life for ever,—yet even then he did not know that she, herself, had passed through the same suffering. But just here the stricken widow of thirty, after a vain attempt to keep up the knitted gravity of her eyebrows, bowed her dimpling face over the letter of the blighted widower of twenty, and laughed so long and silently that the tears stood out like dew on her light-brown eyelashes.

But she became presently severe again, and finished her reading of the letter gravely. Then she folded it carefully, deposited it in a box on her table which she locked. After a few minutes, however, she unlocked the box again and transferred the letter to her pocket. The serenity of her features did not relax again although her previous pretty prepossession of youthful spirit was still indicated in her movements. Going into her bedroom, she reappeared in a few minutes with a light cloak thrown over her shoulders and a white-trimmed broad-brimmed hat. Then she rolled up the manuscript in a paper, and called her French maid. As she stood there awaiting her with the roll in her hand, she might have been some young girl on her way to her music lesson.

“If my brother returns before I do tell him to wait.”

“Madame is going—”

“Out,” said Mrs. Ashwood blithely, and tripped down stairs.

She made her way directly to the shore where she remembered there was a group of rocks affording a shelter from the north-west trade winds. It was reached at low water by a narrow ridge of sand, and here she had often basked in the sun with her book. It was here that she now unrolled John Milton’s manuscript and read.

It was the story she had told him, but interpreted by his poetry and adorned by his fancy until the facts as she remembered them seemed to be no longer hers, or indeed truths at all. She had always believed her cousin’s unhappy temperament to have been the result of a moral and physical idiosyncrasy—she found them here to be the effect of a lifelong and hopeless passion for herself! The ingenious John Milton had given a poet’s precocity to the youth whom she had only known as a suspicious, moody boy, had idealised him as a sensitive but songless Byron, had given him the added infirmity of pulmonary weakness, and a handkerchief that in moments of great excitement, after having been hurriedly pressed to his pale lips, was withdrawn “with a crimson stain.” Opposed to this interesting figure—the more striking to her as she had been hitherto haunted by the impression that her cousin during his boyhood had been subject to facial eruption and boils—was her own equally idealised self. Cruelly kind to her cousin and gentle with his weaknesses while calmly ignoring their cause, leading him unconsciously step by step in his fatal passion, he only became aware by accident that she nourished an ideal hero in the person of a hard, proud, middle-aged practical man of the world—her future husband! At this picture of the late Mr. Ashwood, who had really been an indistinctive social *bon vivant*, his amiable relict grew

somewhat hysterical. The discovery of her real feelings drove the consumptive cousin into a secret, self-imposed exile on the shores of the Pacific, where he hoped to find a grave. But the complete and sudden change of life and scene, the balm of the wild woods and the wholesome barbarism of nature, wrought a magical change in his physical health and a philosophical rest in his mind. He married the daughter of an Indian chief. Years passed, the heroine—a rich and still young and beautiful widow—unwittingly sought the same medicinal solitude. Here in the depth of the forest she encountered her former playmate; the passion which he had fondly supposed was dead, revived in her presence, and for the first time she learned from his bearded lips the secret of his passion. Alas! not *she* alone! The contiguous forest could not be bolted out, and the Indian wife heard all. Recognising the situation with aboriginal directness of purpose, she committed suicide in the fond belief that it would reunite the survivors. But in vain, the cousins parted on the spot to meet no more.

Even Mrs. Ashwood's predilection for the youthful writer could not overlook the fact that the *dénoûment* was by no means novel nor the situation human, but yet it was here that she was most interested and fascinated. The description of the forest was a description of the wood where she had first met Harcourt; the charm of it returned, until she almost seemed to again inhale its balsamic freshness in the pages before her. Now, as then, her youth came back with the same longing and regret. But more bewildering than all, it was herself that moved there, painted with the loving hand of the narrator. For the first time she experienced the delicious flattery of seeing herself as only a lover could see her. The smallest detail of her costume was suggested with an accuracy that pleasantly thrilled her feminine sense. The grace of her figure slowly moving through

the shadow, the curves of her arm and the delicacy of her hand that held the bridle rein, the gentle glow of her softly rounded cheek, the sweet mystery of her veiled eyes and forehead, and the escaping gold of her lovely hair beneath her hat were all in turn masterfully touched or tenderly suggested. And when to this was added the faint perfume of her nearer presence—the scent she always used, the delicate revelations of her withdrawn gauntlet, the bracelet clasping her white wrist, and at last the thrilling contact of her soft hand on his arm—she put down the manuscript and blushed like a very girl. Then she started.

A shout!—*his* voice surely!—and the sound of oars in their rowlocks.

An instant revulsion of feeling overtook her. With a quick movement she instantly hid the manuscript beneath her cloak and stood up erect and indignant. Not twenty yards away, apparently advancing from the opposite shore of the bay, was a boat. It contained only John Milton resting on his oars and scanning the group of rocks anxiously. His face, which was quite strained with anxiety, suddenly flushed when he saw her, and then recognising the unmistakable significance of her look and attitude, paled once more. He bent over his oars again; a few strokes brought him close to the rock.

"I beg your pardon," he said hesitatingly, as he turned towards her and laid aside his oars, "but—I thought—you were—in danger."

She glanced quickly round her. She had forgotten the tide! The ledge between her and the shore was already a foot under brown sea-water. Yet if she had not thought that it would have looked ridiculous she would have leaped down even then and waded ashore.

"It's nothing," she said coldly, with the air of one to whom the situation was an everyday occurrence; "it's only a few steps and a slight wetting—and my brother would have been here in a moment more."

John Milton's frank eyes made no secret of his mortification. "I ought not to have disturbed you, I know," he said quickly; "I had no right. But I was on the other shore opposite and I saw you come down here—that is—"—he blushed prodigiously—"I thought it *might be* you—and I ventured—I—mean—won't you let me row you ashore?"

There seemed to be no reasonable excuse for refusing. She slipped quickly into the boat without waiting for his helping hand, avoiding that contact which only a moment ago she was trying to recall.

A few strokes brought them ashore. He continued his explanation with the hopeless frankness and persistency of youth and inexperience. "I only came here the day before yesterday. I would not have come, but Mr. Fletcher, who has a cottage on the other shore, sent for me to offer me my old place on *The Clarion*. I had no idea of intruding upon your privacy by calling here without permission."

Mrs. Ashwood had resumed her conventional courtesy without however losing her feminine desire to make her companion pay for the agitation he had caused her. "We would have been always pleased to see you," she said vaguely, "and I hope, as you are here now, you will come with me to the hotel. My brother——"

But he still retained his hold of the boat-rope without moving, and continued, "I saw you yesterday, through the telescope, sitting in your balcony; and later at night I think it was your shadow I saw near the blue shaded lamp in the sitting-room by the window—I don't mean the red lamp that you have in your own room. I watched you until you put out the blue lamp and lit the red one. I tell you this — because — because — I thought you might be reading a manuscript I sent you. At least," he smiled faintly, "I *liked* to think it so."

In her present mood this struck her only as persistent and somewhat egotistical. But she felt herself now on

ground where she could deal firmly with him.

"Oh, yes," she said gravely. "I got it and thank you very much for it. I intended to write to you."

"Don't," he said, looking at her fixedly; "I can see you don't like it."

"On the contrary," she said promptly, "I think it beautifully written, and very ingenious in plot and situation. Of course it isn't the story I told you—I didn't expect that, for I'm not a genius. The man is not at all like my cousin, you know, and the woman—well, really to tell the truth, *she* is simply inconceivable!"

"You think so?" he said gravely. He had been gazing abstractedly at some shining brown sea-weed in the water and when he raised his eyes to hers they seemed to have caught its colour.

"Think so? I'm positive! There's no such a woman, she isn't *human*. But let us walk to the hotel."

"Thank you, but I must go back now."

"But at least let my brother thank you for taking his place—in rescuing me. It was so thoughtful in you to put off at once when you saw I was surrounded. I might have been in great danger."

"Please don't make fun of me, Mrs. Ashwood," he said with a faint return of his boyish smile. "You know there was no danger. I have only interrupted you in a nap or a reverie—and I can see now that you evidently came here to be alone."

Holding the manuscript more closely hidden under the folds of her cloak she smiled enigmatically. "I think I *did*, and it seems that the tide thought so too, and acted upon it. But you will come up to the hotel with me surely?"

"No, I am going back now." There was a sudden firmness about the young fellow which she had never before noticed. This was evidently the creature who had married in spite of his family.

"Won't you come back long enough

to take your manuscript? I will point out the part I refer to and—we will talk it over.”

“There is no necessity. I wrote to you that you might keep it; it is yours; it was written for you and none other. It is quite enough for me to know that you were good enough to read it. But will you do one thing more for me? Read it again! If you find anything in it the second time to change your views—if you find—”

“I will let you know,” she said quickly. “I will write to you as I intended.”

“No, I didn’t mean that. I meant that if you found the woman less inconceivable and more human, don’t write to me but put your red lamp in your window instead of the blue one. I will watch for it and see it.”

“I think I shall be able to explain myself much better with simple pen and ink,” she said drily, “and it will be much more useful to you.”

He lifted his hat gravely, shoved off the boat, leaped into it, and before she could hold out her hand was twenty feet away. She turned and ran quickly up the rocks. When she reached the hotel, she could see the boat already half across the bay.

Entering her sitting-room she found that her brother, tired of waiting for her, had driven out. Taking the hidden manuscript from her cloak she tossed it with a slight gesture of impatience on the table. Then she summoned the landlord.

“Is there a town across the bay?”

“No! the whole mountain-side belongs to Don Diego Fletcher. He lives away back in the coast range at Los Gatos, but he has a cottage and mill on the beach.”

“Don Diego Fletcher—Fletcher! Is he a Spaniard then?”

“Half and half I reckon; he’s from the lower country, I believe.”

“Is he here often?”

“Not much; he has mills at Los Gatos, wheat-ranches at Santa Clara, and owns a newspaper in ‘Frisco! But he’s here now. There were lights in

his house last night, and his cutter lies off the point.”

“Could you get a small package and note to him?”

“Certainly; it is only a row across the bay.”

“Thank you.”

Without removing her hat and cloak she sat down at the table and began a letter to Don Diego Fletcher. She begged to enclose to him a manuscript which she was satisfied, for the interests of its author, was better in his hands than hers. It had been given to her by the author, Mr. J. M. Harcourt, whom she understood was engaged on Mr. Fletcher’s paper, *The Clarion*. In fact, it had been written at her suggestion, and from an incident in real life of which she was cognizant. She was sorry to say that on account of some very foolish criticism of her own as to the *facts*, the talented young author had become so dissatisfied with it as to make it possible that, if left to himself, this very charming and beautifully written story would remain unpublished. As an admirer of Mr. Harcourt’s genius, and a friend of his family, she felt that such an event would be deplorable, and she therefore begged to leave it to Mr. Fletcher’s delicacy and tact to arrange with the author for its publication. She knew that Mr. Fletcher had only to read it to be convinced of its remarkable literary merit, and she again would impress upon him the fact that her playful and thoughtless criticism—which was personal and confidential—was only based upon the circumstances that the author had really made a more beautiful and touching story than the poor facts which she had furnished seemed to warrant. She had only just learnt the fortunate circumstance that Mr. Fletcher was in the neighbourhood of the hotel where she was staying with her brother.

With the same practical, business-like directness, but perhaps a certain unbusiness-like haste superadded, she rolled up the manuscript and despatched it with the letter.

This done, however, a slight reaction set in, and having taken off her hat and shawl, she dropped listlessly on a chair by the window, but as suddenly rose and took a seat in the darker part of the room. She felt that she had done right—that highest but most depressing of human convictions! It was entirely for his good. There was no reason why his best interests should suffer for his folly. If anybody was to suffer it was she. But what nonsense was she thinking! She would write to him, later when she was a little cooler—as she had said. But then he had distinctly told her, and very rudely too, that he didn't want her to write. Wanted her to make *signals* to him—the idiot! and probably was even now watching her with a telescope. It was really too preposterous!

The result was that her brother found her on his return in a somewhat uncertain mood, and, as a counsellor, variable and conflicting in judgment. If this Clementina, who seemed to have the family qualities of obstinacy and audacity, really cared for him, she certainly wouldn't let delicacy stand in the way of letting him know it—and he was therefore safe to wait a little. A few moments later, she languidly declared that she was afraid that she was no counsellor in such matters; really she was getting too old to take any interest in that sort of thing, and she never had been a match-maker! By the way now, wasn't it odd that this neighbour, that rich capitalist across the bay, should be called Fletcher, and "James Fletcher" too, for Diego meant "James" in Spanish. Exactly the same name as poor Cousin Jim who disappeared. Did he remember her old playmate Jim? But her brother thought something else was a deuced sight more odd, namely, that this same Don Diego Fletcher was said to be very sweet on Clementina now, and was always in her company at the Ramirezes. And that, with this *Clarion* apology on the top of it, looked infernally queer.

Mrs. Ashwood felt a sudden consternation. Here had she—Jack's sister—just been taking Jack's probable rival into confidential correspondence! She turned upon Jack sharply:

"Why didn't you say that before?"

"I did tell you," he said gloomily, "but you didn't listen. But what difference does it make to you now?"

"None whatever," said Mrs. Ashwood calmly as she walked out of the room.

Nevertheless the afternoon passed wearily, and her usual ride into the upland cañon did not reanimate her. For reasons known best to herself she did not take her after dinner stroll along the shore to watch the outlying fog. At a comparatively early hour, while there was still a roseate glow in the western sky, she appeared with grim deliberation, and the blue lamp shade in her hand, and placed it over the lamp which she lit and stood on her table beside the window. This done she sat down and began to write with bright-eyed but vicious complacency.

"But you don't want that light *and* the window, Constance," said Jack wonderingly.

Mrs. Ashwood could not stand the dreadful twilight.

"But take away your lamp and you'll have light enough from the sunset," responded Jack.

That was just what she didn't want! The light from the window was that horrid vulgar red glow which she hated. It might be very romantic and suit lovers like Jack, but as *she* had some work to do, she wanted the blue shade of the lamp to correct that dreadful glare.

## CHAPTER XII.

JOHN MILTON had rowed back without lifting his eyes to Mrs. Ashwood's receding figure. He believed that he was right in declining her invitation, although he had a miserable feeling that it entailed seeing her for the last time. With all that he believed was his previous experience of the affections, he was still so untutored as to



be confused as to his reasons for declining, or his right to have been shocked and disappointed at her manner. It seemed to him sufficiently plain that he had offended the most perfect woman he had ever known without knowing more. The feeling he had for her was none the less powerful because, in his great simplicity, it was vague and unformulated. And it was a part of this strange simplicity that in his miserable loneliness his thoughts turned unconsciously to his dead wife for sympathy and consolation. Loo would have understood him!

Mr. Fletcher, who had received him on his arrival with singular effusiveness and cordiality, had put off their final arrangements until after dinner, on account of pressing business. It was therefore with some surprise that an hour before the time he was summoned to Fletcher's room. He was still more surprised to find him sitting at his desk from which a number of business papers and letters had been hurriedly thrust aside to make way for a manuscript. A single glance at it was enough to show the unhappy John Milton that it was the one he had sent to Mrs. Ashwood. The colour flushed to his cheek and he felt a mist before his eyes. His employer's face on the contrary was quite pale, and his eyes were fixed on Harcourt with a singular intensity. His voice too, although under great control, was hard and strange.

"Read that," he said, handing the young man a letter.

The colour again streamed into John Milton's face as he recognised the hand of Mrs. Ashwood, and remained there while he read it. When he put it down, however, he raised his frank eyes to Fletcher's and said with a certain dignity and manliness: "What she says is the truth, sir. But it is *I* who am alone at fault. This manuscript is merely *my* stupid idea of a very simple story she was once kind enough to tell me when we were talking of strange occurrences in

real life, which she thought I might some time make use of in my work. I tried to embellish it, and failed. That's all. I will take it back—it was written only for her."

There was such an irresistible truthfulness and sincerity in his voice and manner, that any idea of complicity with the sender was dismissed from Fletcher's mind. As Harcourt, however, extended his hand for the manuscript Fletcher interfered.

"You forget that you gave it to her, and she has sent it to me. If *I* don't keep it, it can be returned to her only. Now may I ask who is this lady who takes such an interest in your literary career? Have you known her long? Is she a friend of your family?"

The slight sneer that accompanied his question restored the natural colour to the young man's face but kindled his eye ominously.

"No," he said briefly. "I met her accidentally about two months ago and as accidentally found out that she had taken an interest in one of the first things I ever wrote for your paper. She neither knew you nor me. It was then that she told me this story; she did not even then know who I was, though she had met some of my family. She was very good and has generously tried to help me."

Fletcher's eyes remained fixed upon him.

"But this tells me only *what* she is, not *who* she is."

"I am afraid you must inquire of her brother, Mr. Shipley," said Harcourt curtly.

"Shipley?"

"Yes; he is travelling with her for his health, and they are going south when the rains come. They are wealthy Philadelphians I believe, and—and she is a widow."

Fletcher picked up her note and glanced again at the signature, "Constance Ashwood." There was a moment of silence, when he resumed in quite a different voice: "It's odd I never met them nor they me."

As he seemed to be waiting for a



response, John Milton said simply: "I suppose it's because they have not been here long, and are somewhat reserved."

Mr. Fletcher laid aside the manuscript and letter, and took up his apparently suspended work.

"When you see this Mrs.—Mrs. Ashwood again, you might say——"

"I shall not see her again," interrupted John Milton, hastily.

Mr. Fletcher shrugged his shoulders. "Very well," he said with a peculiar smile, "I will write to her. Now, Mr. Harcourt," he continued with a sudden business brevity, "if you please, we'll drop this affair and attend to the matter for which I just summoned you. Since yesterday an important contract for which I have been waiting is concluded, and its performance will take me East at once. I have made arrangements that you will be left in the literary charge of *The Clarion*. It is only a fitting recompense that the paper owes to you and your father—to whom I hope to see you presently reconciled. But we won't discuss that now! As my affairs take me back to Los Gatos within half an hour, I am sorry I cannot dispense my hospitality in person,—but you will dine and sleep here to-night. Good-bye. As you go out will you please send up Mr. Jackson to me?" He nodded briefly, seemed to plunge instantly into his papers again, and John Milton was glad to withdraw.

The shock he had felt at Mrs. Ashwood's frigid disposition of his wishes and his manuscript had benumbed him to any enjoyment or appreciation of the change in his fortune. He wandered out of the house and descended to the beach in a dazed, bewildered way, seeing only the words of her letter to Fletcher before him, and striving to grasp some other meaning from them than their coldly practical purport. Perhaps this was her cruel revenge for his telling her not to write to him. Could she not have divined it was only his fear of what she might say! And now it was all

over! She had washed her hands of him with the sending of that manuscript and letter, and he would pass out of her memory as a foolish, conceited ingrate—perhaps a figure as wearily irritating and stupid to her as the cousin she had known. He mechanically lifted his eyes to the distant hotel: the glow was still in the western sky, but the blue lamp was already shining in the window. His cheek flushed quickly, and he turned away as if she could have seen his face. Yes—she despised him, and *that* was his answer!

When he returned, Mr. Fletcher had gone. He dragged through a dinner with Mr. Jackson, Fletcher's secretary, and tried to realise his good fortune in listening to the subordinate's congratulations. "But I thought," said Jackson, "you had slipped up on your luck to-day, when the old man sent for you. He was quite white and ready to rip out about something that had just come in. I suppose it was one of those anonymous things against your father—the old man's dead set against 'em now." But John Milton heard him vaguely, and presently excused himself for a row on the moonlit bay.

The active exertion, with intervals of placid drifting along the land-locked shore, somewhat soothed him. The heaving Pacific beyond was partly hidden in a low creeping fog, but the curving bay was softly radiant. The rocks whereon she sat that morning, the hotel where she was now quietly reading, were outlined in black and silver. In this dangerous contiguity it seemed to him that her presence returned—not the woman who had met him so coldly; who had penned those lines; the woman from whom he was now parting for ever, but the blameless ideal he had worshipped from the first, and which he now felt could never pass out of his life again! He recalled their long talks, their rarer rides and walks in the city; her quick appreciation and ready sympathy; her pretty curiosity and half-maternal consideration of his foolish youthful past; even

the playful way that she sometimes seemed to make herself younger as if to better understand him. Lingered at times in the shadow of the headland, he fancied he saw the delicate nervous outlines of her face near his own again ; the faint shading of her brown lashes, the soft intelligence of her grey eyes. Drifting idly in the placid moonlight, pulling feverishly across the swell of the channel, or lying on his oars in the shallows of the rocks, but always following the curves of the bay, like a bird circling around a lighthouse, it was far in the night before he at last dragged his boat upon the sand. Then he turned to look once more at her distant window. He would be away in the morning and he should never see it again ! It was very late, but the blue light seemed to be still burning unalterably and inflexibly.

But even as he gazed, a change came over it. A shadow seemed to pass before the blind ; the blue shade was lifted ; for an instant he could see the colourless star-like point of the light itself show clearly. It was over now : she was putting out the lamp. Suddenly he held his breath ! A roseate glow gradually suffused the window like a burning blush ; the curtain was drawn aside, and the red lamp shade gleamed out surely and steadily into the darkness.

Transfigured and breathless in the moonlight, John Milton gazed on it. It seemed to him the dawn of Love !

### CHAPTER XIII.

THE winter rains had come. But so plenteously and persistently, and with such fateful preparation of circumstance, that the long-looked-for blessing presently became a wonder, an anxiety, and at last a slowly widening terror. Before a month had passed every mountain, stream, and watercourse, surcharged with the melted snows of the Sierras, had become a great tributary ; every tributary a great river, until, pouring their

great volume into the engorged channels of the American and Sacramento rivers, they overleaped their banks and became as one vast inland sea. Even to a country already familiar with broad and striking catastrophe, the flood was a phenomenal one. For days the sullen overflow lay in the valley of the Sacramento, enormous, silent, currentless—except where the surplus waters rolled through Carquinez Straits, San Francisco Bay, and the Golden Gate, and reappeared as the vanished Sacramento River, in an outflowing stream of fresh and turbid water fifty miles at sea.

Across the vast inland expanse, brooded over by a leaden sky, leaden rain fell, dimpling like shot the sluggish pools of the flood ; a cloudy chaos of fallen trees, drifting barns and outhouses, waggons and agricultural implements moved over the surface of the waters, or circled slowly around the outskirts of forests that stood ankle deep in ooze and the current which in serried phalanx they resisted still. As night fell these forms became still more vague and chaotic, and were interspersed with the scattered lanterns and flaming torches of relief-boats, or occasionally the high terraced gleaming windows of the great steamboats feeling their way along the lost channel. At times the opening of a furnace-door shot broad bars of light across the sluggish stream and into the branches of dripping and drift-encumbered trees ; at times the looming smoke-stacks sent out a pent-up breath of sparks that illuminated the inky chaos for a moment, and then fell as black and dripping rain. Or perhaps a hoarse shout from some faintly outlined bulk on either side brought a quick response from the relief-boats, and the detaching of a canoe with a blazing pine-knot in its bow into the outer darkness.

It was late in the afternoon when Lawrence Grant, from the deck of one of the larger tugs, sighted what had been once the estuary of Sidon Creek.

The leader of a party of scientific observation and relief he had kept a tireless watch of eighteen hours, keenly noticing the work of devastation, the changes in the channel, the prospects of abatement, and the danger that still threatened. He had passed down the length of the submerged Sacramento valley, through the Straits of Carquinez, and was now steaming along the shores of the upper reaches of San Francisco Bay. Everywhere the same scene of desolation—vast stretches of *tule* land, once broken up by cultivation and dotted with dwellings, now clearly erased on that watery chart; long lines of symmetrical perspective, breaking the monotonous level, showing orchards buried in the flood; Indian mounds and natural eminences covered with cattle or hastily erected camps; half submerged houses, whose solitary chimneys, however, still gave signs of an undaunted life within; isolated groups of trees, with their lower branches heavy with the unwholesome fruit of the flood, in wisps of hay and straw, rakes and pitchforks, or pathetically sheltering some shivering and forgotten household pet. But everywhere the same dull, expressionless, placid tranquillity of destruction—a horrible levelling of all things in one bland smiling equality of surface, beneath which agony, despair, and ruin were deeply buried and forgotten; a catastrophe without convulsion—a devastation voiceless, passionless, and supine.

The boat had slowed up before what seemed to be a collection of disarranged houses with the current flowing between lines that indicated the existence of thoroughfares and streets. Many of the lighter wooden buildings were huddled together on the street corners with their gables to the flow; some appeared as if they had fallen on their knees, and others lay complacently on their sides, like the houses of a child's toy village. An elevator still lifted itself above the other warehouses; from the centre of an enormous square pond, once the *plaza*, still

arose a "Liberty pole," or flagstaff, which now supported a swinging lantern, and in the distance appeared the glittering dome of some public building. Grant recognised the scene at once. It was all that was left of the invincible youth of Tasajara!

As this was an objective point of the scheme of survey and relief for the district, the boat was made fast to the second story of one of the warehouses. It was now used as a general store and *dépôt*, and bore a singular resemblance in its interior to Harcourt's grocery at Sidon. This suggestion was the more fatefully indicated by the fact that half-a-dozen men were seated around a stove in the centre, more or less given up to a kind of philosophical and lazy enjoyment of their enforced idleness. And when to this was added the more surprising coincidence that the party consisted of Billings, Peters, and Wingate,—former residents of Sidon and first citizens of Tasajara—the resemblance was complete.

They were ruined,—but they accepted their common fate with a certain Indian stoicism and Western sense of humour that for the time lifted them above the vulgar complacency of their former fortunes. There was a deep-seated, if coarse and irreverent, resignation in their philosophy. At the beginning of the calamity it had been roughly formulated by Billings in the statement that "it wasn't anybody's fault; there was nobody to kill, and what couldn't be reached by a Vigilance Committee there was no use resolootin' over." When the Reverend Doctor Pilsbury had suggested an appeal to a Higher Power, Peters had replied good-humouredly, that a "Creator who could fool around with them in that style was above being interfered with by prayer." At first the calamity had been a thing to fight against; then it became a practical joke, the sting of which was lost in the victims' power of endurance and assumed ignorance of its purport. There was something almost pathetic in their attempts to understand its peculiar humour.

"How about that Europ-e-an trip o' yours, Peters?" said Billings meditatively, from the depths of his chair. "Looks as if those Crowned Heads over there would have to wait till the water goes down considerable afore you kin trot out your wife and darters before 'em!"

"Yes," said Peters, "it rather pints that way; and ez far ez I kin see, Mame Billings ain't goin' to no Saratoga, neither, this year."

"Reckon the boys won't hang about old Harcourt's Free Library to see the girls home from lectures and singing-class much this year," said Wingate. "Wonder if Harcourt ever thought o' this the day he opened it, and made that rattlin' speech o' his about the new property? Clark says everything built on that made ground has got to go after the water falls. Rough on Harcourt after all his other losses, eh? He oughter have closed up with that scientific chap, Grant, and married him to Clementina while the big boom was on——"

"Hush!" said Peters, indicating Grant, who had just entered quietly.

"Don't mind me, gentlemen," said Grant, stepping towards the group with a grave but perfectly collected face; "on the contrary, I am very anxious to hear all the news of Harcourt's family. I left for New York before the rainy season, and have only just got back."

His speech and manner appeared to be so much in keeping with the prevailing grim philosophy that Billings, after a glance at the others, went on. "Ef you left afore the first rains," said he, "you must have left only the steamer ahead of Fletcher when he run off with Clementina Harcourt, and you might have come across them on their wedding-trip in New York."

Not a muscle of Grant's face changed under their eager and cruel scrutiny. "No, I didn't," he returned quietly. "But why did she run away? Did the father object to Fletcher? If I

remember rightly he was rich and a good match."

"Yes, but I reckon the old man hadn't quite got over *The Clarion* abuse for all its eating humble pie and taking back its yarns of him. And maybe he might have thought the engagement rather sudden. They say that she'd only met Fletcher the day afore the engagement."

"That be d——d," said Peters, knocking the ashes out of his pipe, and startling the lazy resignation of his neighbours by taking his feet from the stove and sitting upright. "I tell ye, gentlemen, I'm sick o' this sort o' hog-wash that's been ladled round to us. That gal Clementina Harcourt and that feller Fletcher had met not only once, but *many* times afore——yes! they were old friends if it comes to that, a matter of six years ago."

Grant's eyes were fixed eagerly on the speaker, although the others scarcely turned their heads.

"You know, gentlemen," said Peters, "I never took stock in this yer story of the drownin' of Lige Curtis. Why? Well, if you wanter know—in my opinion—there never was any Lige Curtis!"

Billings lifted his head with difficulty; Wingate turned his face to the speaker.

"There never was a scrap o' paper ever found in his cabin with the name o' Lige Curtis on it; there never was any inquiry made for Lige Curtis; there never was any sorrowin' friends comin' after Lige Curtis. For why?—There never was any Lige Curtis. The man who passed himself off in Sidon under that name—was that man Fletcher. That's how he knew all about Harcourt's title; that's how he got his best holt on Harcourt. And he did it all to get Clementina Harcourt, whom the old man had refused to him in Sidon."

A grunt of incredulity passed around the circle. Such is the fate of historical innovation! Only Grant listened attentively.

"Ye ought to tell that yarn to John Milton," said Wingate ironically; "it's about in the style o' them stories he slings in *The Clarion*."

"He's made a good thing out of that job. Wonder what he gets for them?" said Peters.

It was Billings' time to rise, and, under the influence of some strong cynical emotion, to even rise to his feet. "Gets for 'em!—*gets* for 'em! I'll tell you *what* he gets for 'em! It beats this story o' Peters'—it beats the flood. It beats me! Ye know that boy, gentlemen; ye know how he uster lie round his father's store, reading flapdoodle stories and sich? Ye remember how I uster try to give him good examples and knock some sense into him? Ye remember how, after his father's good luck, he spiled all his own chances, and ran off with his father's waiter gal—all on account o' them flapdoodle books he read? Ye remember how he sashayed round newspaper offices in Frisco until

he could write a flapdoodle story himself? Ye wanter know what he gets for 'em? I'll tell you. He got an interdution to one of them high-toned, high-falutin' 'don't-touch-me' rich widders from Philadelfy—that's what he gets for 'em. He got her dead-set on him and his stories—that's what he gets for 'em! He got her to put him up with Fletcher in *The Clarion*—that's what he gets for 'em. And darn my skin!—ef what they say is true, while we hard-working men are sittin' here like drowned rats—that air John Milton, ez never did a stitch o' live work like me 'n' yere; ez never did anythin' but spin yarns about *us* ez did work, is now 'gittin' for 'em,'—what? Guess! Why, he's gittin' *the rich widder herself* and *half a million dollars with her*! Gentlemen! lib'ty is a good thing—but thar's some things ye gets too much lib'ty of in this county—and that's this yer Lib'ty of THE PRESS!

THE END.



## WILLIAM COBBETT.

To acquaint oneself properly with the works of Cobbett is no child's play. It requires some money, a great deal of time, still more patience, and a certain freedom from superfineness. For as few of his books have recently been reprinted, and as they were all very popular when they appeared, it is frequently necessary to put up with copies exhibiting the marks of that popularity in a form with which Coleridge and Lamb professed to be delighted, but to which I own that I am churl enough to prefer the clean, fresh leaves of even the most modern reprint. And the total is huge; for Cobbett's industry and facility of work were both appalling, and while his good work is constantly disfigured by rubbish, there is hardly a single parcel of his rubbish in which there is not good work. Of the seventy-four articles which compose his bibliography, some of the most portentous, such as the *State Trials* (afterwards known as Howell's) and the *Parliamentary Debates* (afterwards known as Hansard's), may be disregarded as simple compilation; and it is scarcely necessary for any one to read the thirty years of *The Register* through, seeing that almost everything in it that is most characteristic reappeared in other forms. But this leaves a formidable total. The *Works of Peter Porcupine*, in which most of Cobbett's writings earlier than this century and a few later are collected, fill twelve volumes of fair size. The only other collection, the *Political Works*, made up by his sons after his death from *The Register* and other sources, is in six volumes, none of which contains less than five hundred, while one contains more than eight hundred large pages, so closely printed that each represents two if not three of the usual library octavo.

The *Rural Riles* fill two stout volumes in the last edition; besides which there are before me literally dozens of mostly rather grubby volumes of every size from Tull's *Husbandry*, in a portly octavo, to the *Legacy to Labourers*, about as big as a lady's card-case. If a man be virtuous enough, or rash enough, to stray further into anti-Cobbett pamphlets (of which I once bought an extremely grimy bundle for a sovereign) he may go on in that path almost for ever. And I see no rest for the sole of his foot till he has read through the whole of "the bloody old *Times*" or "that foolish drab Anna Brodie's rubbish," as Cobbett used with indifferent geniality to call that newspaper,—the last elegant description being solely due to the fact that he had become aware that a poor lady of the name was a shareholder.

Let it be added that this vast mass is devoted almost impartially to as vast a number of subjects, that it displays throughout the queerest and (till you are well acquainted with it) the most incredible mixture of sense and nonsense, folly and wit, ignorance and knowledge, good temper and bad blood, sheer egotism and sincere desire to benefit the country. Cobbett will write upon politics and upon economics, upon history ecclesiastical and civil, upon grammar, cookery, gardening, woodcraft, standing armies, population, ice-houses, and almost every other conceivable subject, with the same undoubting confidence that he is and must be right. In what plain men still call inconsistency there never was his equal. He was approaching middle life when he was still writing cheerful pamphlets and tracts with such titles as *The Bloody Buoy*, *The Cannibal's Progress*, and so on, destined to hold up the



French Revolution to the horror of mankind; he had not passed middle life when he discovered that the said Revolution was only a natural and necessary consequence of the same system of taxation which was grinding down England. He denied stoutly that he was anything but a friend to monarchical government, and asseverated a thousand times over, that he had not the slightest wish to deprive landlords or any one else of their property. Yet for the last twenty years of his life he was constantly holding up the happy state of those republicans the profligacy, injustice, and tyranny of whose government he had earlier denounced. He sometimes came near, if he did not openly avow, the "hold-the-harvest" doctrine; and he deliberately proposed that the national creditor should be defrauded of his interest, and therefore practically of his capital. A very shrewd man naturally, and by no means an ill-informed one in some ways, there was no assertion too wildly contradictory of facts, no assumption too flagrantly opposed to common sense, for him to make when he had an argument to further or a craze to support. "My opinion is," says he very gravely, "that Lincolnshire alone contains more of those fine buildings [churches] than the whole continent of Europe." The churches of Lincolnshire are certainly fine; but imagine all the churches of even the western continent of Europe, from the abbey of Batalha to Cologne Cathedral, and from Santa Rosalia to the Folgoët, crammed and crouching under the shadow of Boston Stump! He "dare say that Ely probably contained from fifty to a hundred thousand people" at a time when it is rather improbable that London contained the larger number of the two. Only mention Jews, Scotchmen, the National Debt, the standing army, pensions, poetry, tea, potatoes, larch trees, and a great many other things, and Cobbett becomes a mere, though a very amusing, maniac. Let him meet in one of his peregrinations, or merely

remember in the course of a book or article, some magistrate who gave a decision unfavourable to him twenty years before, some lawyer who took a side against him, some journalist who opposed his pamphlets, and a torrent of half humorous but wholly vindictive Billingsgate follows; while if the luckless one has lost his estate, or in any way come to misfortune meanwhile, Cobbett will jeer and whoop and triumph over him like an Indian squaw over a hostile brave at the stake. Mixed with all this you shall find such plain shrewd common sense, such an incomparable power of clear exposition of any subject that the writer himself understands, such homely but genuine humour, such untiring energy, and such a hearty desire for the comfort of everybody who is not a Jew or a jobber or a tax-eater, as few public writers have ever displayed. And (which is the most important thing for us) you shall also find sense and nonsense alike, rancorous and mischievous diatribes as well as sober discourses, politics as well as trade-puffery (for Cobbett puffed his own wares unblushingly), all set forth in such a style as not more than two other Englishmen, whose names are Defoe and Bunyan, can equal.

Like theirs it is a style wholly natural and unstudied. It is often said, and he himself confesses, that as a young man he gave his days and nights to the reading of Swift. But except in the absence of adornment, and the uncompromising plainness of speech, there is really very little resemblance between them, and what there is is chiefly due to Cobbett's following of the *Drapier's Letters*, where Swift, admirable as he is, is clearly using a falsetto. For one thing, the main characteristic of Swift—the perpetual, unforced, unflagging irony which is the blood and the life of his style—is utterly absent from Cobbett. On the other hand, if Cobbett imitated little, he was imitated much. Although his accounts of the circulation of his works are doubtless exaggerated

as he exaggerated everything connected with himself, it was certainly very large; and though they were no doubt less read by the literary than by the non-literary class, they have left traces everywhere. As a whole Cobbett is not imitable; the very reasons which gave him the style forbade another to borrow it. But certain tricks of his reappear in places both likely and unlikely; and since I have been thoroughly acquainted with him I think I can see the ancestry of some of the mannerisms of two writers whose filiation had hitherto puzzled me—Peacock and Borrow. In the latter case there is no doubt whatever; indeed the kinship between Borrow and Cobbett is very strong in many ways. Even in the former I do not think there is much doubt, though Peacock's thorough scholarship and Cobbett's boisterous unscholarliness make it one of thought rather than of form, and of a small part of thought only.

He has left an agreeable and often quoted account of his own early life in an autobiographic fragment written to confound his enemies in America. He was born on March 9th, 1762,<sup>1</sup> at Farnham; and the chief of his interests during his life centred round the counties of Hampshire and Surrey, with Berkshire and Wiltshire thrown in as benefiting by neighbourhood. His father was a small farmer, not quite uneducated, but not much in means or rank above a labourer, and all the family were brought up to work hard. After some unimportant vicissitudes, William ran away to London and, attempting quill-driving in an attorney's office for a time, soon got tired of it and enlisted in a marching regiment which was sent to Nova Scotia. This was in the spring of 1784. As he was steady, intelligent, and not uneducated, he very soon rose from the ranks, and was sergeant-

major for some years. During his service with the colours he made acquaintance with his future wife (a gunner's daughter of the literal and amiable kind), and with Lord Edward Fitzgerald. The regiment came home in 1792, and Cobbett got his discharge, married his beloved, and went to France. Unfortunately he had other reasons besides love and a desire to learn French for quitting British shores. He had discovered, or imagined, that some of his officers were guilty of malversation of regimental money: he abused his position as sergeant-major to take secret copies of regimental documents; and when he had got his discharge he lodged his accusation. A court-martial was granted. When it met, however, there was no accuser, for Cobbett had gone to France. Long afterwards, when the facts were cast up against him, he attempted a defence. The matter is one of considerable intricacies and of no great moment. Against Cobbett it may be said to be one of the facts which prove (what indeed hardly needs proving), that he was not a man of any chivalrous delicacy of feeling, and did not see that in no circumstances can it be justifiable to bring accusations of disgraceful conduct against others and then run away. In his favour it may be said that, though not a very young man, he was not in the least a man of the world, and was no doubt sincerely surprised and horrified to find that his complaint was not to be judged off-hand and Cadi-fashion, but with all sorts of cumbrous and expensive forms.

However this may be, he went off with his wife and his savings to France; and enjoyed himself there for some months, tackling diligently to French the while, until the Revolution (it was, let it be remembered, in 1792) made the country too hot for him. He determined to go to Philadelphia, where, and elsewhere in the United States, he passed the next seven years. They were seven years of a very lively

<sup>1</sup> Cobbett himself says 1766, and the dates in the fragment are all adjusted to this; but biography says 1762.

character; for it was the nature of Cobbett to find quarrels, and he found plenty of them here. Some accounts of his exploits in offence and defence may be found in the biographies, fuller ones in the books of the chronicles of Peter Porcupine, his *nom de guerre* in pamphleteering and journalism. Cobbett was at this time, despite his transactions with the Judge Advocate General, his flight and his selection of France and America for sojourn, a red-hot Tory and a true Briton, and he engaged in a violent controversy, or series of controversies, with the pro-Gallic and anti-English party in the States. The works of Peter, besides the above-quoted *Bloody Buoy* and *Cannibal's Progress*, contain in their five thousand pages or thereabouts, other cheerfully named documents, such as, *A Bone to Gnaw for the Democrats*, *A Kick for a Bite*, *The Diplomatic Blunderbuss*, *The American Rushlight*, and so on. This last had mainly to do with a non-political quarrel into which Cobbett got with a certain quack doctor named Rush. Rush got Cobbett cast in heavy damages for libel; and though these were paid by subscription, the affair seems to have disgusted our pamphleteer and he sailed for England on June 1st, 1800.

There can be little doubt, though Cobbett's own bragging and the bickering of his biographers have rather darkened than illuminated the matter, that he came home with pretty definite and very fair prospects of Government patronage. More than one of his Anti-Jacobin pamphlets had been reprinted for English consumption. He had already arranged for the London edition of *Porcupine's Works* which appeared subsequently; and he had attracted attention not merely from literary understrappers of Government but from men like Windham. Very soon after his return Windham asked him to dinner, to meet not merely Canning, Ellis, Frere, Malone and others, but Pitt himself. The publication of the host's diary long

afterwards clearly established the fact, which had been rather idly contested or doubted by some commentators. How or why Cobbett fell away from Pitt's party is not exactly known, and is easier to understand than to definitely explain; even when he left it is not certain. He was offered, he says, a Government paper, or even two; but he refused and published his own *Porcupine*, which lasted for some time till it lapsed (with intermediate stages) into the famous *Weekly Register*. In both, and in their intermediates for some three or four years at least, the general policy of the Government, and especially the war with France, was stoutly supported. But Cobbett was a free-lance born and bred, and he never during the whole of his life succeeded in working under any other command than his own, or with any one on equal terms. He got into trouble before very long owing to some letters, signed *Juvena*, on the Irish executive; and though his contributor (one Johnson, afterwards a judge), gave himself up, and Cobbett escaped the fines which had been imposed on him, his susceptible vanity had no doubt been touched. It was also beyond doubt a disgust to his self-educated mind to find himself regarded as an inferior by the regularly trained wits and scholars of the Government press; and I should be afraid that he was annoyed at Pitt's taking no notice of him. But, to do Cobbett justice, there were other and nobler reasons for his revolt. His ideal of politics and economics (of which more presently), though an impossible one, was sincere and not ungenerous; and he could not but perceive that a dozen years of war had made its contrast with the actual state of the British farmer and labourer more glaring than ever. The influence which he soon wielded, and the profit which he derived through the *Register*, at once puffed him up and legitimately encouraged the development of his views. He bought, or rather (a sad thing for such a denouncer of "paper"), ob-

tained, subject to heavy mortgages, a considerable estate of several farms at and near Botley in Hampshire. Here for some five years (1805 to 1809), he lived the life of a very substantial yeoman, almost a squire, entertaining freely, farming, coursing, encouraging boxing and single-stick, fishing with drag-nets, and editing the *Register* partly in person and partly by deputy. Of these deputies, the chief were his partner, and afterwards foe, the printer Wright, and Howell of the *State Trials*. This latter, being unluckily a gentleman and a university man, comes in for one of Cobbett's characteristic flings as "one of your college gentlemen," who "have and always will have the insolence to think themselves our betters; and our superior talents, industry and weight only excite their envy." Prosperity is rarely good for an Englishman of Cobbett's stamp, and he seems at this time to have decidedly lost his head. He had long been a pronounced Radical, thundering or guffawing in the *Register* at pensions, sinecures, the debt, paper-money, the game-laws (though he preserved himself), and so forth; and the authorities naturally enough only waited for an opportunity of explaining to him that immortal maxim which directs the expectations of those who play at this kind of bowls. In July, 1809, he let them in by an article of the most violent character on the suppression of a mutiny among the Ely Militia. This had been put down, and the ring-leaders flogged by some cavalry of the German Legion; and Cobbett took advantage of this to beat John Bull's drum furiously. It has been the custom to turn up the whites of the eyes at Lord Ellenborough who tried the case, and Sir Vicary Gibbs who prosecuted; but I do not think that any sane man, remembering what the importance of discipline in the army was in 1809, can find fault with the jury who, and not Ellenborough or Gibbs, had to settle the matter, and who found Cobbett guilty. The sentence

no doubt was severe,—as such sentences in such cases were then wont to be—two years in Newgate. The judge, in imposing a fine of a thousand pounds, and security in the same amount for seven years to come, may be thought to have looked before and after as well as at the present. But the *Register* was not stopped, and Cobbett was allowed to continue in it without hindrance a polemic which was not likely to grow milder. For he never forgot or forgave an injury to his interests, or an insult to his vanity; and he was now becoming, quite honestly and disinterestedly, more and more of a fanatic on divers points, both of economics and of politics proper.

I cannot myself attach much importance to the undoubted fact that after the trial, which happened in June, 1810, but before judgment, Cobbett, aghast for a moment at the apparent ruin impending, made (as he certainly did make) some overtures of surrender and discontinuance of the *Register*. Such a course in a man with a large family and no means of supporting it but his pen, would have been, if not heroic, not disgraceful. But the negotiation somehow fell through. Unluckily for Cobbett, he on two subsequent occasions practically denied that he had ever made any offer at all; and the truth only came out when he and Wright quarrelled, nearly a dozen years later. This, the affair of the court-martial, and another to be mentioned shortly, are the only blots on his conduct as a man that I know, and in such an Ishmael as he was they are not very fatal.

He devoted the greater part of his time, during the easy, though rather costly, imprisonment of those days, to his *Paper against Gold*, in which, with next to no knowledge of the subject, he attacked probably the thorniest of all subjects, that of the currency; and the *Register* went on. He came out of Newgate in July, 1812, naturally in no very amiable temper. A mixture of private and public griefs almost immediately brought him into collision



with the authorities of the Church. He had long been at loggerheads with those of the State; and it was now more than ever that he became the advocate (and the most popular advocate it had) of Parliamentary Reform. He was, however, pretty quiet for three or four years, but at the end of that time, in September, 1816, he acted on a suggestion of Lord Cochrane's, cheapened the *Register* from one shilling to two-pence, and opened the new series with one of his best pamphlet addresses, "To the Journeymen and Labourers of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland." For a time he was very much in the mouths of men; but Ministers were not idle, and prepared for him a state of things still hotter than he had experienced before. Cobbett did not give it time to heat itself specially for him. He turned his eyes once more to America, and, very much to the general surprise, suddenly left Liverpool on March 22nd, 1817, arriving in May at New York, whence he proceeded to Long Island, and established himself on a farm there. Unluckily there were other reasons for his flight besides political ones. His affairs had become much muddled during his imprisonment, and had not mended since; and though his assets were considerable they were of a kind not easy to realise. There seems no doubt that Cobbett was generally thought to have run away from a gaol in more senses than one, and that the thought did him no good.

But he was an impossible person to put down; even his own mistakes, which were pretty considerable, could not do it. His flight, as it was called, gave handles to his enemies, and not least to certain former friends, including such very different persons as Orator Hunt and Sir Francis Burdett; it caused a certain belatedness, and, for a time, a certain intermittency, in his contributions to the *Register*; it confirmed him in his financial crazes, and it may possibly have supported him in a sort of private repudiation of his own debts, which he executed even

before becoming legally a bankrupt. Finally it led him to the most foolish act of his life, the lugging of Tom Paine's bones back to a country which, though not prosperous, could at any rate provide itself with better manure than that. In this famous absurdity the purely silly side of Cobbett's character comes out. For some time after he returned he was at low water both in finances and in popularity; while such political sanity as he ever possessed may be said to have wholly vanished. Yet, oddly enough, or not oddly, the transplanting and the re-transplanting seem to have had a refreshing effect on his literary production. He never indeed again produced anything so vigorous as the best of his earlier political works, but in non-political and mixed styles he even improved; and though he is occasionally more extravagant than ever in substance, there is a certain mellowness of form which is very remarkable. He was not far short of sixty when he returned in 1819; but the space of his life subsequent to his flight yielded the *Year's Residence in America*, the *English Grammar*, the *Twelve Sermons*, the *Cottage Economy*, the *English* (altered from a previous *American*) *Gardener*, the *History of the Reformation*, the *Woodlands*, *Cobbett's Corn*, the *Advice to Young Men*, and a dozen other works original or compiled, besides the *Rural Rides* and his other contributions to the *Register*.

He could not have lived at Botley any longer if he would, for the place was mortgaged up to the eyes. But to live in a town was abhorrent to him; and he had in America rather increased than satisfied his old fancy for rural occupations. So he set up house at Kensington, where he used a large garden (soon supplemented by more land at Barnes, and in his very last years by a place near Ash in his native district) as a kind of seed farm, selling the produce at the same shop with his *Registers*. He also utilized his now frequent rural rides, partly as commercial travelling for the diffusion of locust-trees, swede turnip

seed, and Cobbett's corn—a peculiar kind of maize, the virtues of which he vaunted loudly.

Also he began to think seriously of sitting in Parliament. At the general election after George the Third's death he contested Coventry, but without even coming near success. Soon afterwards he had an opportunity of increasing his general popularity—which, owing to his flight, his repudiation, and the foolery about Paine's bones, had sunk very low—by vigorously taking Queen Caroline's side. But he was not more fortunate in his next Parliamentary attempt at Preston, in 1826. Preston, even before the Reform Bill, was, though the Stanley influence was strong, a comparatively open borough, and had a large electorate; but it would not have Cobbett, nor was he ever successful till after the Bill passed. Before its passing the very Whig Government which had charge of it was obliged to pull him up. If he had been treated with undeserved severity before he was extremely fortunate now, though his rage against his unsuccessful Whig prosecutors was, naturally enough, much fiercer than it had been against his old Tory enemies. I do not think that any fair-minded person who reads the papers in the *Register*, and the cheaper and therefore more mischievous *Two-penny Trash*, devoted to the subject of "Swing," can fail to see that under a thin cloak of denunciation and dissuasion their real purport is "Don't put him under the pump," varied and set off by suggestions how extremely easy it would be to put him under the pump, and how improbable detection or punishment. And nobody, further, who reads the accounts of the famous Bristol riots can fail to see how much Cobbett (who had been in Bristol just before in full cry against "Tax-Eaters" and "Tithe-Eaters") had to do with them. It was probably lucky for him that he was tried before instead of after the Bristol matter, and even as it was he was not acquitted; the jury disagreed. After the Bill, his election somewhere was a certainty,

and he sat for Oldham till his death. Except a little foolery at first, and at intervals afterwards, he was inoffensive enough in the House. Nor did he survive his inclusion in that Collective Wisdom at which he had so often laughed many years, but died on June 19th, 1835, at the age of seventy-three. If medical opinion is right the Collective Wisdom had the last laugh; for its late hours and confinement seemed to have more to do with his death than any disease.

I have said that it is of great importance to get if possible a preliminary idea of Cobbett's general views on politics. This not only adds to the understanding of his work, but prevents perpetual surprise and possible fretting at his individual flings and crazes. To do him justice there was from first to last very little change in his own political ideal; though there was the greatest possible change in his views of systems, governments, and individuals in their relations to that ideal and to his own private interests or vanities. In this latter respect Cobbett was very human indeed. The son of a farmer-labourer, and himself passionately interested in agricultural pursuits, he may be said never, from the day he first took to politics to the day of his death, to have really and directly considered the welfare of any other class than the classes occupied with tilling or holding land. In one place he frantically applauds a real or supposed project of King Ferdinand of Spain for taxing every commercial person who sold, or bought to sell again, goods not of his own production or manufacture. If he to a certain extent tolerated manufactures, other than those carried on at home for immediate use, it was grudgingly, and indeed inconsistently with his general scheme. He frequently protests against the substitution of the shop for the fair or market; and so jealous is he of things passing otherwise than by actual delivery in exchange for actual coin or payment in kind, that he grumbles at one market



(I think Devizes) because the corn is sold by sample and not pitched in bulk on the market-floor. It is evident that if he possibly could have it, he would have a society purely agricultural, men making what things the earth does not directly produce as much as possible for themselves in their own houses during the intervals of field-labour. He quarrels with none of the three orders,—labourer, farmer, and landowner—as such; he does not want “the land for the people,” or the landlord’s rent for the farmer. Nor does he want any of the lower class to live in even mitigated idleness. Eight hours’ days have no place in Cobbett’s scheme; still less relief of children from labour for the sake of education. Everybody in the labouring class, women and children included, is to work and work pretty hard; while the landlord may have as much sport as ever he likes provided he allows a certain share to his tenant at times. But the labourer and his family are to have “full bellies” (it would be harsh but not entirely unjust to say that the full belly is the beginning and end of Cobbett’s theory), plenty of good beer, warm clothes, staunch and comfortably furnished houses. And that they may have these things they must have good wages; though Cobbett does not at all object to the truck or even the “Tommy” system. He seems to have, like a half socialist as he is, no affection for saving, and he once, with rather disastrous consequences, took to paying his own farm-labourers entirely in kind. In the same way the farmer is to have full stack-yards, a snug farm-house, with orchards and gardens thoroughly plished. But he must not drink wine or tea, and his daughters must work and not play the piano. Squires there may be of all sorts, from the substantial yeoman to the lord (Cobbett has no objection to lords), and they may, I think, meet in some way or other to counsel the king (for Cobbett has no objection to kings). There is to be a militia for the defence of the country, and there

might be an Established Church provided that the tithes were largely, if not wholly, devoted to the relief of the poor and the exercise of hospitality. Everybody, provided he works, is to marry the prettiest girl he can find (Cobbett had a most generous weakness for pretty girls) as early as possible and have any number of children. But though there is to be plenty of game, there are to be no game-laws. There is to be no standing army, though there may be a navy. There is to be no, or the very smallest, civil service. It stands to reason that there is to be no public debt; and the taxes are to be as low and as uniform as possible. Commerce, even on the direct scale, if that scale be large, is to be discouraged, and any kind of middleman absolutely exterminated. There is to be no poetry (Cobbett does sometimes quote Pope, but always with a gibe), no general literature (for though Cobbett’s own works are excellent, and indeed indispensable, that is chiefly because of the corruptions of the times), no fine arts—though Cobbett has a certain weakness for church architecture, mainly for a reason presently to be explained. Above all there is to be no such thing as what is called abroad a *rentier*. No one is to “live on his means,” unless these means come directly from the owning or the tilling of land. The harmless fund-holder with his three or four hundred a year, the government-clerk, the half-pay officer, are as abhorrent to Cobbett as the pensioner for nothing and the sinecurist. This is the state of things which he loves, and it is because the actual state of things is so different, and for no other reason, that he is a Radical Reformer.

I need not say that no such connected picture as I have endeavoured to draw will be found in any part of Cobbett’s works.<sup>1</sup> The strokes which compose it are taken from a thousand

<sup>1</sup> The nearest approach is in the *Manchester Lectures* of 1831; but this is not so much a project of an ideal State as a scheme for reforming the actual.

different places and filled in to a certain extent by guess work. But I am sure it is faithful to what he would have drawn himself if he had been given to imaginative construction. It will be seen at once that it is a sort of parallel in drab homespun, a more practical double (if the adjective may be used of two impracticable things), of Mr. William Morris's agreeable dreams. The art tobacco-pouches, and the museums, the young men hanging about off Biffin's to give any one a free row on the river, and so forth, were not in Cobbett's way. But the canvas, and even the main composition of the picture, is the same. Of course the ideal State never existed anywhere, and never could continue to exist long if it were set up in full working order to-morrow. Labourer A. would produce too many children, work too few hours, and stick too close to the ale-pot; farmer B. would be ruined by a bad year or a murrain; squire C. would outrun the non-existent constable and find a Jew to help him, even if Cobbett made an exception to his hatred of placemen for the sake of a Crown toothdrawer. One of the tradesmen who were permitted on sufferance to supply the brass kettles and the grandfathers' clocks which Cobbett loves would produce better goods and take better care of the proceeds than another, with the result of a better business and hoarded wealth. In short men would be men, and the world the world, in spite of Cobbett and Mr. Morris alike.

I doubt whether Cobbett, who knew something of history, ever succeeded in deceiving himself, great as were his powers that way, into believing that this state ever had existed. He would have no doubt gone into a paroxysm of rage and have called me as bad names as it was in his heart to apply to any Hampshire man, if I had suggested that such an approach to it as existed in his beloved fifteenth century was due to the Black Death, the French wars and those of the Roses. But the fair vision ever fled before him day

and night, and made him more and more furious with the actual state of England,—which was no doubt bad enough. The labourers with their eight or ten shillings a week and their Banyan diet, the farmers getting half-price for their ewes and their barley, the squires ousted by Jews and jobbers, filled his soul with a certainly not ignoble rage, only tempered by a sort of exultation to think in the last case that the fools had brought their ruin on their own heads by truckling to "the Thing." "The Thing" was the whole actual social and political state of England; and on everything and everybody that had brought "the Thing" about he poured impartial vitriol. The war which had run up the debt and increased the tax-eaters at the same time; the boroughmongers who had countenanced the war; the Jews and jobbers that negotiated and dealt in the loans; the parsons that ate the tithes; the lawyers that did government work,—Cobbett thundered against them all. But his wrath also descended upon far different, and one would have thought sufficiently guiltless, things and persons. The potato, the "soul-destroying root" so easy to grow (Cobbett did not live to see the potato famine or I fear he would have been rather hideous in his joy) so innutritious, so exclusive of sound beef and bread, has worse language than even a stock-jobber or a sinecurist. Tea, the expeller of beer, the pamperer of foreign commerce, the waster of the time of farmers' wives, is nearly as bad as the potato. I could not within any possible or probable space accorded me here follow out a tithe or a hundredth part of the strange ramifications and divagations of Cobbett's grand economic craze. The most comical branch perhaps is his patronage of the Roman Catholic Church, and the most comical twig of that branch his firm belief that the abundance and size of English churches testify to an infinitely larger population in England of old than at the present day. His rage at the impu-

dent Scotchman who put the population at two millions when he is sure it was twenty, and the earnestness with which he proves that a certain Wiltshire vale having so many churches capable of containing so many people must have once had so many score thousand inhabitants, are about equally amusing. That in the days which he praises much, and in which these churches were built, the notion of building a church to seat so many would have been regarded as unintelligible if not blasphemous; that in the first place the church was an offering to God, not a provision for getting worship done; and that in the second, the worship of old with its processions, its numerous altars in the same churches, and so on, made a disproportionate amount of room absolutely necessary,—these were things you could no more have taught Cobbett than you could have taught him to like *Marmion* or read the *Witch of Atlas*.

It is however time, and more than time, to follow him rapidly through the curious labyrinth of work in which, constantly though often very unconsciously keeping in sight this ideal, he wandered from Pittite Toryism to the extreme of half socialist and wholly radical Reform. His sons, very naturally but rather unwisely, have in the great selection of the *Political Works* drawn very sparingly on Peter Porcupine. But no estimate of Cobbett that neglects the results of this, his first, phase will ever be satisfactory. It is by no means the most amusing division of Cobbett's works; but it is not the least characteristic, and it is full of interest for the study both of English and of American politics. The very best account that I know of the original American Constitution, and of the party strife that followed the peace with England, is contained in the summary that opens the Works. Then for some years we find Cobbett engaged in fighting the Jacobin party, the fight constantly turning into skirmishes on his private account, con-

ducted with singular vigour if at a length disproportionate to the present interest of the subject. Here is the autobiography before noticed, and in all the volumes, especially the earlier ones, the following of Swift, often by no means unhappy, is very noticeable. It is a little unlucky that a great part of the whole consists of selections from Porcupine's Gazette, that is to say, of actual newspaper matter of the time, — "slag-heaps," to use Carlyle's excellent phrase, from which the metal of present application has been smelted out and used up long ago. This inconvenience also and of necessity applies to the still larger collection, duplicating, as has been said, a little from Porcupine, but principally selected from the *Register*, which was published after Cobbett's death. But this is of far greater general importance, for it contains the pith and marrow of all his writings on the subject to which he gave most of his heart. Here, in the first volume, besides the selection from Porcupine, are the masterly *Letters to Addington on the Peace of Amiens*, in which that most foolish of the foolish things called armistices is treated as it deserved, and with a combination of vigour and statesmanship which Cobbett never showed after he lost the benefit of Windham's patronage and (probably) inspiration. Here too is a defence of bull-baiting after Windham's own heart. The volume ends with the *Letters to William Pitt*, in which Cobbett declared and supported his defection from Pitt's system generally. The whole method and conduct of the writings of this time are so different from the rambling denunciations of Cobbett's later days, and from the acute but rather desultory and extremely personal Porcupinades, that one is almost driven to accept the theory of "inspiration." The literary model too has shifted from Swift to Burke,—Burke upon whom Cobbett was later to pour torrents of his foolishlest abuse; and both in this first and in the second volume the

reformer appears wandering about in search of subjects not merely political but general, Crim. Con., Poor-laws, and so forth. But in the second volume we have to notice a paper still in the old style and full of good sense, on Boxing. In the third Cobbett is in full Radical cry. Here is the article which sent him to Newgate; and long before it a series of virulent attacks on the Duke of York in the matter of Mrs. Clarke, together with onslaughts on those Anti-Jacobins to whom Cobbett had once been proud to belong. It also includes a very curious *Plan for an Army*, which marks a sort of middle stage in Cobbett's views on that subject. The latter part of it, and the whole of the next (the fourth) consist mainly of long series on the Regency (the last and permanent Regency), on the Regent's disputes with his wife, and on the American War. All this part displays Cobbett's growing ill-temper, and also the growing wildness of his schemes—one of which is a sliding scale adjusting all salaries, from the Civil List to the soldier's pay, according to the price of corn. But there is still no loss of vigour, if some of sanity; and the opening paper of the fifth volume, the famous *Address to the Labourers* aforesaid, is, as I have said, perhaps the climax of Cobbett's political writing in point of force and form,—which thing I say utterly disagreeing with almost all its substance. This same fifth volume contains another remarkable instance of Cobbett's extraordinary knack of writing, as well as of his rapidly decreasing judgment, in the *Letter to Jack Harrow, an English Labourer, on the new Cheat of Savings Banks*. At least half of the volume dates after Cobbett's flight, while some is posterior to his return. The characteristics which distinguish his later years, his wild crotchets and his fantastic running-a-muck at all public men of all parties and not least at his own former friends, distinguish both it and the sixth and last, which carries the selection down to his death. Yet even

such things as the *Letter to Old George Rose* and that from *The Labourers of the ten little Hard Parishes* [this was Cobbett's name for the district between Winchester and Whitchurch, much of which had recently been acquired by the predecessors of Lord Northbrook] to *Alexander Baring, Loanmonger*, both, at a considerable distance of time, show the strength and the weakness of this odd person in conspicuous mixture. He is as rude, as coarse, as personal as may be; he is grossly unjust to individuals and wildly flighty in principle and argument; it is almost impossible to imagine a more dangerous counsellor in such, or indeed in any times. Except that he is harder-headed and absolutely unchivalrous, his politics are very much those of Colonel Newcome. And yet the vigour of the style is still so great, the flame and heat of the man's conviction are so genuine, his desire according to the best he knows to benefit his clients, and his unselfishness in taking up those clients, are so unquestionable that it is impossible not to feel both sympathy and admiration. If I had been Dictator about 1830 I think I should have hanged Cobbett; but I should have sent for him first and asked leave to shake hands with him before he went to the gallows.

These collections are invaluable to the political and historical student; and I hardly know any better models, not for the exclusive, but for the eclectic attention of the political writer, especially if his education be academic and his tastes rather anti-popular. But there is better pasture for the general student. The immense variety of the works, which, though they cannot be called non-political—Cobbett would have introduced politics into arithmetic and astronomy, as he actually does into grammar—are not political in main substance and purport. They belong almost entirely, as has been said, to the last seventeen or eighteen years of Cobbett's life; and putting the *Year's Residence* aside, the *English Grammar* is the earliest. It is couched in a



series of letters to his son James, who had been brought up to the age of fourteen on the principle (by no means a bad one) of letting him pick up the Three R's as he pleased, and leaving him for the rest "To ride and hunt and shoot, to dig the beds in the garden, to trim the flowers, and to prune the trees." It is like all Cobbett's books, on whatsoever subject, a wonderful mixture of imperfect information, shrewd sense, and fantastic crotchet. On one page Cobbett calmly instructs his son that "prosody" means "pronunciation"; on another, he confuses "etymology" with "accidence." This may make the malicious college-bred man envious of the author's superior genius; but there is no doubt that the book contains about as clear an account of the practical and working nature and use of sound English speech and writing as can anywhere be found. Naturally Cobbett is not always right; but if any one will compare his book, say with a certain manual composed by a very learned Emeritus Professor in a certain University of Scotland, and largely inflicted on the youth of that kingdom as well as to some extent on those of the adjoining realm, he will not, I think, be in much doubt which to prefer. The grammar was published in 1818, and Cobbett's next book of note was the *Religious Tracts*, afterwards called *Twelve Sermons*. He says that many parsons had the good sense to preach them; and indeed, a few of his usual outbursts excepted, they are as sound specimens of moral exhortation as anybody need wish to hear or deliver. They are completed characteristically enough by a wild onslaught on the Jews, separately paged as if Cobbett was a little ashamed of it. Then came the *Cottage Economy*, instructing and exhorting the English labourer in the arts of brewing, baking, stock-keeping of all sorts, making straw-bonnets, and building ice-houses. This is perhaps the most agreeable of all Cobbett's minor books, next to the *Rural Rides*. The descriptions are as vivid as *Robinson Crusoe*, and are

further lit up by flashes of the genuine man. Thus, after a most peaceable and practical discourse on the making of rush-lights, he writes: "You may do any sort of work by this light; and if reading be your taste you may read the foul libels, the lies, and abuse which are circulated gratis about *me* by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge." Here too is a charming piece of frankness: "Any beer is better than water; but it should have *some* strength and *some* weeks of age at any rate." A rearrangement of the *Horse-hoeing Industry* of Jethro Tull, barrister, and the *French Grammar* hardly count among his purely and originally literary work; but the *History of the Reformation* is one of its most characteristic if not one of its most admirable parts. Cobbett's feud with the clergy was now at its height; he had long before been at daggers drawn with his own parson at Botley. The gradual hardening of his economic crazes made him more and more hate "Tithe-Eaters," and his wrath with them was made hotter by the fact that they were as a body opponents of Reform. So with a mixture of astounding ignorance and of self-confidence equally amazing, he set to work to put the crudest Roman view of the Reformation and of earlier times into his own forcible English. The book is very amusing; but it is so grossly ignorant, and the virulence of its tirades against Henry VIII. and the rest so palpable, that even in that heated time it would not do. It may be gathered from some remarks of Cobbett's own that he felt it a practical failure; though he never gave up its views, and constantly in his latest articles and speeches invited everybody to search it for the foundation of all truth about the Church of England. The more important of his next batch of publications, the *Woodlands*, *The English Gardener*, *Cobbett's Corn*, restore a cooler atmosphere; though even here there are the usual spurts. Very amusing is the suppressed wrath of the potato article in the *English Gardener*, with its magnani-

mous admission that "there appears to be nothing unwholesome about it; and it does very well to qualify the effects of the meat or to assist in the swallowing of quantities of butter." Pleasing too is the remark, "If this turnip really did come from Scotland, there is something good that is Scotch." The *Cobbett's Corn*, already noticed, is one of the most curious of all his books, and an instance of his singular vigour in taking up fancies. Although he sold the seed, it does not appear that he could in any case have made much profit out of it; and he gave it away so freely that it would, had it succeeded, soon have been obtainable from any seedsman in the kingdom. Yet he writes a stout volume about it, and seems to have taken wonderful interest in its propagation, chiefly because he hoped it would drive out his enemy the potato. The English climate was naturally too much for it; but the most amusing thing, to me at least, about the whole matter is the remembrance that the "yellow meal" which it, like other maize, produced, became a short time after Cobbett's own death the utter loathing and abomination of English and Irish paupers and labourers, a sort of sign and symbol of capitalist tyranny. Soon afterwards came the last of Cobbett's really remarkable and excellent works, the *Advice to Young Men and Incidentally to Young Women*, one of the kindest and most sensible books of its kind ever written. The other books of Cobbett's later years are of little account in any way; and in the three little *Legacies* (to Labourers, to Peel, and to Parsons) there is a double portion of now cut-and-dried crotchet in matter, and hardly any of the old power in form.

Yet to the last, or at any rate till his disastrous election, Cobbett was Cobbett. The *Rural Rides*, though his own collection of them stopped at 1830, went on to 1832. This, the only one of his books, so far as I know, that has been repeatedly and recently reprinted, shows him at his best and his worst;

but almost always at his best in form. Indeed, the reader for mere pleasure need hardly read anything else, and will find there to the full the delightful descriptions of rural England, the quaint, confident, racy, wrong-headed opinions, the command over the English language and the ardent affection for the English soil and its children, that distinguish Cobbett at his very best.

I have unavoidably spent so much time on this account of Cobbett's own works,—an account which without copious extract must be, I fear, still inadequate,—that the anti-Cobbett polemic must go with hardly any notice at all. Towards the crisis of the Reform Bill it became very active, and at times remarkable. Among two collections which I possess, one of bound tracts dating from this period, the other of loose pamphlets ranging over the greater part of Cobbett's life, the keenest by far is a certain publication called *Cobbett's Penny Trash*, which figures in both, though one or two others have no small point. The enemy naturally made the utmost of the statement of the condemned labourer Goodman, who lay in Horsham Gaol under sentence of death for arson, that he had been stirred up by Cobbett's addresses to commit the crime; but still better game was made controversially of his flagrant and life-long inconsistencies, of his enormous egotism, of his tergiversation in the matter of the offer to discontinue the *Register*, and of his repudiation of his debt to Sir Francis Burdett. And the main sting of the *Penny Trash*, which must have been written by a very clever fellow indeed, is the imitation of Cobbett's own later style, its italics, its repetitions, its quaint mannerisms of fling and vaunt. The example of this had of course been set much earlier by the Smiths in *Rejected Addresses*, but it was even better done here.

Cobbett was indeed vulnerable enough. He, if any one, is the justification of the theory of Time, Country, and *Milieu*, and perhaps the fact



that it only adjusts itself to such persons as he is the chief condemnation of that theory. Even with him it fails to account for the personal genius which after all is the only thing that makes him tolerable, and which when he is once tolerated, makes him almost admirable. Only an English *Terræ Filius*, destitute of the education which the traditional *Terræ Filius* had, writing too in the stress of the great Revolutionary struggle and at hand-grips with the inevitable abuses which that struggle at once left unbettered, after the usual gradual fashion of English betterment, and aggravated by the pressure of economic changes—could have ventured to write with so little knowledge or range of logical power, and yet have written with such individual force and adaptation of style to the temper of his audience. At a later period and in different circumstances Cobbett could hardly have been so acrimonious, so wildly fantastic, so grossly and almost impudently ignorant, and if he had been he would have been simply laughed at or unread. At an earlier period, or in another country, he would have been bought off or cut off. Even at the same time the mere circumstantial fact of the connection of most educated and well-informed writers with the Government or at least with the regular Opposition, gave such a Free-lance as this an unequalled opportunity of making himself heard. His very inconsistency, his very ferocity, his very ignorance, gave him the key of the hearts of the multitude, who just then were the persons of most importance. And to these persons that characteristic of his which is either most laughable or most disgusting to the educated,—his most unparalleled, his almost inconceivable egotism—was no drawback. When Cobbett with many italics in an advertisement to all his later books told them, “When I am asked what books a young man or young woman ought to read I always answer: ‘Let him or her read *all the books that I have writ-*

*ten,*’” proceeding to show in detail that this was no humorous gasconade but a serious recommendation, one “which it is my *duty* to give,” the classes laughed consumedly. But the masses felt that Cobbett was at any rate a much cleverer and more learned person than themselves, had no objection on the score of taste, and were naturally conciliated by his partisanship on their own side. And, clever as he was, he was not too clever for them. He knew that they cared nothing about consistency, nothing about chivalry, nothing about logic. He could make just enough and not too much parade of facts and figures to impress them. And above all he had that invaluable gift of belief in himself and in his own fallacies which no demagogue can do without. I do not know a more fatal delusion than the notion, entertained by many persons, that a mere charlatan, a conscious charlatan, can be effective as a statesman, especially on the popular side. Such a one may be an excellent understrapper; but he will never be a real leader.

In this respect however Cobbett is only a lesson, a memory, and an example, which are all rather dead things. In respect of his own native literary genius he is still a thing alive and delectable. I have endeavoured, so far as has been possible in treating a large subject in little room, to point out his characteristics in this respect also. But as happens with all writers of his kidney he is not easily to be characterised. Like certain wines he has the *goût du terroir*; and that gust is rarely or never definable in words. It is however I think critically safe to say that the intensity and peculiarity of Cobbett’s literary savour are in the ratio of his limitation. He was content to ignore so vast a number of things, he so bravely pushed his ignorance into contempt of them and almost into denial of their real existence, that the other things are real for him and in his writings to a degree almost unexampled. I am not the

first by many to suggest that we are too diffuse in our modern imagination, that we are cumbered about too many things. No one could bring this accusation against Cobbett; for immense as his variety is in particulars, these particulars group themselves under comparatively few general heads. I do not think I have been unjust in suggesting that this ideal was little more than the bellyful, that Messer Gaster was not only his first but his one and sufficient master of arts. He was not irreligious, he was not immoral; but his religion and his morality were of the simplest and most matter-of-fact kind. Philosophy, æsthetics, literature, the more abstract sciences, even refinements of sensual comfort and luxury he cared nothing for. Indeed he had a strong dislike to most of them. He must always have been fighting about something; but I think his polemics might have been harmlessly parochial at another time. It is marvellous how this resolute confinement of view at once sharpens and sublimates the eyesight within the confines. He has somewhere a really beautiful and almost poetical passage of enthusiasm over a great herd of oxen as "so much splendid meat."

He can see the swells of the downs, the flashing of the winter bournes as they spring from the turf where they have lain hid, the fantastic outline of the oak woods, the reddening sweep of the great autumn fields of corn as few have seen them, and can express them all with rare force and beauty in words. But he sees all these things conjointly and primarily from the point of view of the mutton that the downs will breed and the rivers water, the faggots that the labourer will bring home at evening, the bread he will bake and the beer he will brew—strictly according to the precepts of *Cottage Economy*. It may be to some minds a strange and almost incredible combination. It is not so to mine, and I am sure that by dint of it and by dint of holding himself to it he achieved his actual success of literary production. To believe in nothing very much, or in a vast number of things dispersedly, may be the secret of criticism; but to believe in something definite, were it only the bellyful, and to believe in it furiously and exclusively is, with almost all men, the secret of original art.

GEORGE SAINTSBURY.

## THE EXPERIENCES OF AN AFRICAN TRADER.

It is but a short while since the British public appeared to be possessed with a consuming ardour for enterprise and colonisation in the remoter regions of the African Continent. The blessings of commerce and civilisation were everywhere dilated on. Pæans were sung over the self-denial, the patience, the heroism, and the other virtues of African explorers. Mr. Stanley and his comrades started in a blaze of triumph, and with the good wishes of everybody, on their expedition for the rescue of that much-abused Pasha who so incontinently objected to be rescued, and who, unless rumour lies, is now stealthily making his way back to those very provinces whence he was with such vast trouble and expense withdrawn. The African fever was then at its height. The pioneers of trade with the dusky aborigines were the frequent recipients of titles and other rewards, and many men could conceive of no higher ambition than to sit, along with dukes and marquises, on the boards of chartered companies.

But a change has come over the spirit of the scene since the publication of Mr. Stanley's quarrels with his subordinates. The jealousies, the squabbles, and the recriminations of the various parties to that unhappy dispute have an entire literature of their own, and people are growing heartily sick of the whole business. The result is a sudden revulsion of popular sentiment towards African enterprise, and the public now shows, according to its wont, a tendency to rush into the opposite extreme. In place of being the hero of the hour, the explorer of the Dark Continent is represented as one influenced solely by low and mercenary motives. His professions of philanthropy are "all

cant and humbug," and serve as cloak for filibustering and the commission of crimes of the darkest hue. Have we not had all this, and more to the same effect, from no less a person than Mr. Henry Labouchere, and does he not speak as one having authority? A plague, then, on your philanthropic missions and commercial enterprises! Let the noble savage rest in his pristine and picturesque retirement. He is better as he is. What matter though he starve periodically, though his life be one long struggle with misery that results solely from oppression and anarchy? Let us not mind; famine and the slave-trade are at least preferable to the Bible and bad rum.

All this being so, it is with a feeling of deep contrition that I write myself down as one who, having travelled a good deal in some of its remoter places, thoroughly believes in opening Africa to commerce and civilisation. Nay, I have even gone so far as to actually take part (in a very humble way, to be sure) in the nefarious task myself. It is a humiliating fact that only a short time ago I took a few shares in a trading venture in the Eastern Soudan, and I am now about to describe a few of our preliminary experiences. I say "our" experiences; but I was, after all, but a subordinate performer in the little comedy which was acted for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Red Sea Littoral, though I accept my full share of the responsibility.

Suakin was our base of operations and thither I repaired in the spring of last year, together with my friend, Mr. John Tayler Wills, to whose zeal and energy our Company owes its origin. I do not propose to inflict upon my readers a description of the

queer little Red Sea port or its surroundings. As is well known, it is celebrated neither for the beauty of its scenery nor the salubrity of its climate, though in this latter respect I am inclined to think that it has been somewhat maligned. I shall endeavour, therefore, to keep strictly within the scope and title of the present article, and to confine myself to giving an account of our trading experiences. If, as I fear, these are occasionally pervaded by a vein of comedy such as is not usually incidental to sound business enterprises, the reason must be sought in the fact of our having commenced operations somewhat prematurely, at a period of widespread distress, and before life and property had been rendered safe in the interior. Everything must have a beginning, and blunders customarily mark the initial steps of novel undertakings. So soon as prosperity revives and the Dervishes are finally expelled, and the inland caravan routes are rendered practicable for traders, commercial enterprise in the Eastern Soudan will show very different results.

The apostle of African development should, in my humble opinion, enter on his self-appointed task in a spirit of philanthropy tempered by the more or less remote prospects of dividends. Such, I believe, was the spirit in which Mr. Wills went to work. For myself, it would be wiser to admit,—it would probably be futile to deny,—that I was actuated by those meaner and more degrading motives with which pioneers of commerce in savage countries are now commonly credited. And yet I am not conscious of having committed any overt act of startling wickedness. I supplied the noble Hadendowa with no bad gin or rum, or indeed with spirits of any description. I made no attempts to supersede his native home-grown religion by articles of spurious foreign manufacture. I believe we were guilty of importing Manchester goods, but I am not aware that grey shirtings have any particularly corrupting influence

on the native mind. We had a number of what the Police Court reporters call "coloured persons" in our employ, but we did not treat them after the fashion set by the Emin Relief Expedition. We did not place intolerable loads upon them, except bags of *dhurra* for their own consumption, or flog them severely when they sank under their burdens. We assisted at no cannibal entertainments. Nor, so far as I am aware, did either of us go about showing our teeth, grinning, or "barking like a dog" at our retainers. I never detected Mr. Wills prodding native ladies in the ribs with an iron-pointed Cyprus staff. I certainly did not do so myself. Yet these, I believe, are now accepted as the regular methods of African adventurers, and the fact that we did not employ them is probably due solely to our being new to the business.

On landing at Suakin we found a gallant bevy of native chieftains of various tribes, both great and small, who, together with several hundreds of their followers, had collected in the town to await our arrival. There were fuzzy-wigged Hadendowas and turbaned Amarars, many of whom had fought against the English in the campaigns of 1884-5. There were agriculturists from the Tokar Delta, and even from places so far distant as Filik in the neighbourhood of Kassala. There were strapping mountaineers from the hill country near Sinkat, tribesmen from the coast regions to the north and from the territory bordering on the Suakin-Berber route. Most of the branches of the Ethiopian race seemed to be represented in the dusky throng who, with up-turned faces and eyes glistening with expectation, stood congregated round the Company's house. The news that "the Company was coming" had been spread abroad by over-zealous and officious tongues, and I fear unduly great expectations had been formed of the benefits which were to ensue from its establishment. Visions of bounteous distributions of food floated

before the eyes of these poor creatures, many of whom had been for months past on the verge of starvation. All were possessed with one idea and one only, namely, to get as much *dhurra* (white millet, the staple food of the country) out of the Company as possible. The dreadful famine which decimated the Eastern Soudan during the whole of last year is too well known to need any further allusion here. The knowledge that relief was being served out in Suakin naturally caused a large influx of natives from the interior. Every day our house was besieged by crowds of Arabs, who had been sent, or had come of their own accord, in the hope of getting bread for their famished wives and little ones.

"If you are willing," wrote a friendly sheikh, "to give us the necessary *dhurra*, do so; if not, God is our aid." In fact, instructions seemed to have been universally issued: "Ask for the Soudan Trading Company's *dhurra*, and see that you get it." And to tell the truth, they did get it from Mr. Wills, to the extent of 200,000 lbs. and upwards. The bulk of the distributions were made as advances in consideration of the sheikhs signing contracts for the cultivation of cotton on joint account with the Company. A large amount, however, of the grain thus distributed by way of advances was in reality gratuitous, and the return, if any, upon the outlay will have to be made in another and better world than this. Bread was also served out daily to the famine-stricken poor at the city gates by the local Relief Committee. An excellent impression was thus created among the natives, who began to recognise for the first time that the English, in spite of some previous misdeeds in the country, were after all their best friends. Many were in this way gained over to the side of the Government, and the authority of the Mahdists was undermined. It is most unfortunate that this good impression should have been in a measure weak-

ened last autumn by the cruel decrees of the Government expelling the poor starving creatures from the town, and stopping the trade in grain with the interior, by which terrible suffering was needlessly caused. But I am deviating into the thorny paths of political controversy which are quite beyond the scope of this paper.

We had much talk with the sheikhs of the different tribes and, as may be imagined, we gained much interesting information. The burden of their song was that the Dervishes were the curse of the country, and they would to Heaven they could get rid of them; that the times were very bad and distress universal; that no real improvement in the state of the country could be expected so long as the Mahdists were in power; and, finally, that they liked the English and all wished "to serve the Company." This last phrase surprised me a good deal at first. I had heard so much of the magnificent independence of the haughty Hadendowa that I had imagined he would sooner die than sacrifice his liberty. Yet here they were evidently ready to sell themselves and their services to the highest bidder. If the English did not employ them, then they would go to the Italians. Famine, however, is a hard taskmaster, and the spirit of the coast tribes has been entirely quenched by their sufferings. So much the better for the prospects of the future pacification and progress of the Soudan. The natives have further learned to regard the English with very different feelings from those which animated them a few years ago, and it only requires justice and good government to make these sentiments permanent. One white-haired old gentleman from Filik, who was a large landowner and leading sheikh of the great Hadendowa clan, waxed quite pathetic on the subject. He said he had known Gordon and had served under him, and that he had a great regard for the English. His country at Kassala was almost empty owing to the famine, and the people



there had no work. They did not like to beg for food, but preferred to take it in the form of advances. What they wanted was to have the Company as their father, and if necessary, he said he would go home with us and see all the big aristocrats and the King of England! I noticed, by the way, that all these people showed a very proper filial feeling in the way in which they looked to their "father" to feed them and supply them with money. Personally, I must admit that paternity on so large a scale was a responsibility which would have weighed heavily upon me. Still, the sensation of quasi-suzerainty which their professions conveyed was novel and not unpleasing.

One of the first events of importance after our arrival was the return of one of our native traders, whom our agent had despatched to Berber and Khartoum about three months previously. He was a medium-sized, mild-mannered Ethiop, with a transparently honest face, big eyes, and a snub nose. He rejoiced in the name of Mohammed Achmed Waharda Aila, and he boasted himself a *shereef* (descendant of the Prophet) of the Amara tribe. In obedience to Kismet and Osman Digna's decree enforcing shaven crowns, he had sacrificed his touzled fuzzy wig and wore in its place a parti-coloured turban. The account he gave of his stewardship was, to say the least of it, highly entertaining. Commerce in these out-of-the-way parts is conducted upon strangely primitive principles according to our European notions. First of all you have to catch your trader. When you think you have got hold of a fairly honest man you supply him with a good stock of selected samples of grey shirtings, buy him a camel or two for the journey, and start him off. These goods he exchanges up country for gold or silver, gum, ivory, musk, frankincense, myrrh, or other produce of the interior. Of course you have to trust entirely to the man's honesty in the account he renders on his return, and I believe experience shows that

the confidence thus reposed is very seldom abused. They also tell me that some people have amassed colossal fortunes in this way. I can only say that as yet I am not one of those fortunate persons.

Waharda Aila appeared to have got along pretty well as far as Berber, the monotony of the journey being broken only by an attack from some marauding Baggaras who stole one of his camels and seven *korugas* (pieces) of grey shirting. This, however, is one of the more commonplace incidents of Eastern travel and is scarcely worth recording. These Baggaras are a warlike freebooting tribe of Kordofan Arabs, with a great deal of black blood in their veins. As *The Times* put it they "combine professional brigandage with a burning faith," and, together with the Jaaleens from near Dongola, they form the mainstay of Osman Digna's army.

Arriving at Berber, Waharda Aila went straight to the house of one En Noor Greffeiyeh, the Hakeemdar, or Director of Customs to the Mahdi. To this official he was the bearer of presents and a letter from our agent in Suakin. En Noor received him (and the presents) with open arms, and was good enough to write us a letter in reply. In this document the Hakeemdar dilated upon the high regard in which he held his friends of the Sudan Trading Company. He expressed the hope that we might some day join the true faith, in which alone, he assured us, we could expect to find peace and happiness both in this world and in the next. As a proof of his esteem he had taken four hundred dollars off our messenger, and I rather gathered from the context that he hoped this was not the last time he might have the opportunity of doing so. The following are some extracts from the Hakeemdar's epistle.

From En Noor Greffeiyeh, son of En Noor Ibrahim, the Director of Customs at Berber, to my friends in God and the Prophet, greeting.

I have received your letter, and the four

boxes of tea and the box of sugar and the carpet have arrived. May God give you back tenfold. Your present is accepted by us, but in future do not send us letters. [He was afraid of their compromising him as having accepted bribes from the infidel.] On the arrival of your people the Khalifa directed that they should all go to the *Bug'āa* (Treasury) to buy ivory, and in consequence of your request that I should care for them I sent them with a letter to the Director-General of the common purse at the *Bug'āa*, recommending them to him, and there they sold their merchandise; and they might have obtained ivory if they had wished, but in consequence of my recommendation they were not forced to take either gum or ivory, as it [the ivory, presumably] had been all under water and would have been useless for you. Now we send you a present of one sword and a uniform, and we hope you will accept them and have fortune with them; and we have taken from your messenger Mohammed Achmed Waharda Aila four hundred dollars, and we trust you will repay him [a pretty cool request, I thought]; and when he returns here again with goods it will be deducted from the duty upon them. And as regards merchandise here, cotton piece-goods are very bad to sell [here follows advice about trade which is not worth recording] . . . Be not afraid but rely on our friendship. Destroy this when you have read it, for it is impossible for us to write to each other, but as you have been kind and good to us, we write. The peace.

The elaborate precautions taken by the wily Hakeemdar to avoid compromising himself failed to avert the doom which awaited him, and which, I have little doubt, he richly merited. Being detected, not many months later, in the peculation of certain dues which he had intended to divert from the pockets of the Mahdi to his own, the Khalifa ordered his head to be chopped off, and the sentence was duly carried into effect. I should add that the sword and uniform arrived in due course, and the latter lies before me as I write. It is a long white cotton garment covered with patches of red, blue, and black cloth, which I believe are marks of distinction denoting an officer of high rank in the Dervish army.

From Berber our trader proceeded to Khartoum, and he gave us a harrowing account of the traces of ruin and desolation left by the twin destroyers, war and famine, in the districts he traversed. The country was almost denuded of its inhabitants, and such few as remained were perishing of hunger. At Metammeh not a soul was left. The way was strewn with human skulls and bones. All the *sakiyehs*, or waterwheels, were silent, for their owners were no more. At Khartoum itself widows and orphans were in the majority: *dhurra* was at eight times its normal price; and even Slatin Bey, Gordon's sole surviving lieutenant, was begging for food. Here Waharda Aila was subjected to further extortion at the hands of the Mahdist officials. A gentleman of the name of Ibrahim Walad Etlan, who appeared to be a sort of Chancellor of the Exchequer to the Khalifa, required *baksheesh* at his hands, though, to do him justice, he was more moderate in his demands than the Hakeemdar of Berber. But then neither did he send us a sword and uniform nor a nice letter full of pretty compliments. Circumstances being so unfavourable for trade, Waharda made no great stay at Khartoum. Having finally disposed of the remainder of his merchandise, he returned by easy stages to Suakin, dropping a few more dollars on the way at Handoub, which were exacted from him by Achmed Mahmoud, the Dervish commander of that stronghold.

After such an interesting narrative it seemed almost impertinent to ask, but I did venture to inquire what he had to show for the grey shirtings and camels and other equipment where-with he had been endowed prior to his departure up country. He replied that he had got some gold in rings, a large horn of musk, and an Abyssinian woman.

"Abyssinian woman?" said I, "what's she for?"

"Oh! I bought her," replied Waharda Aila, in no whit abashed.

"Bought her? Why did you buy her, and where is she?"

He said that he had left the lady in the hills at the back of Handoub (a most ungallant proceeding, I thought) for fear of Achmed Mahmoud, who would most assuredly have taken and appropriated her for his own use. She would probably follow him into Suakin, he added, or else he would himself go and fetch her, when we should have an opportunity of seeing for ourselves the latest addition to the live stock of the Soudan Trading Company.

Gradually the real nature of the transaction in which we had been vicariously engaged dawned upon me, and the truth presented itself to my mind in all its naked hideousness. *Qui facit per alium facit per se* is a fine old legal maxim which, in the days when I was at the Bar, I often heard Her Majesty's Judges roll forth with portentous solemnity from the Bench. On this principle beyond question we had been constructively guilty of slave-trading. We, philanthropic pioneers in the vanguard of commerce and civilisation, would be branded and pointed at with the finger of scorn as having actually taken part in the vile traffic in human flesh. It was terrible! I pictured to myself the Anti-Slavery Society up in arms against us, and the Aborigines' Protectionists foaming at the mouth with indignation, and I fairly staggered under the blow. I had received the news of the theft of our dollars by En Noor and the Chancellor of the Exchequer at Khartoum without blanching: I had borne with stoical indifference the loss of the camel and the grey shirtings; but this last was too much.

Summoning all my fortitude, I faintly inquired how this atrocity had come to be perpetrated in our name. And then the murder came out. It appeared that our agent in Suakin, who to his other virtues seemed to add a vein of knight-errantry, had given Waharda Aila orders, if he got the chance, to purchase the freedom of any of the white women now in captivity at

Khartoum. It is well known that at the time of General Gordon's death, when the capital of the Soudan fell into the hands of the Mahdists, several white people resident in the town were taken prisoners and sold into slavery. Among them were several young high-born Italian ladies who had gone out as nuns in the service of the Roman Catholic Church. Splendid creatures they were too, I was assured by an impressionable Suakinee who had seen them pass through the town some years before, with lovely faces and aristocratic mien. After the fall of Khartoum these nuns are said to have gone through the ceremony of marriage with some of the Greek captives in order to save themselves from being sold into the harems of the Mahdists, and, for all that is known to the contrary, they are still alive in the town. There was also said to be kept in durance vile there an old lady who did General Gordon's washing during the siege, and she, it was supposed, might be bought out. If we could not purchase an Italian nun, by all means let us liberate a washerwoman. Well, Waharda Aila was told to procure, if he could, the freedom of any or all of these distressed damsels. But he maintained, and stuck to his point with great pertinacity, that he was not restricted by his instructions to "white" women. His orders were, he said, to liberate "Christian women." Now, it happens that the Abyssinians are Christians, and our excellent trader had evidently made use of the discretion given him to purchase himself a suitable wife.

We asked him how much he had paid for her. He calmly replied, "Two hundred dollars, and two dollars brokerage." The cold-blooded business-like air in which he uttered these words was staggering. I was not aware before that they had brokers in those outlandish parts. I omitted to ask him if there were any stockjobbers as well, but the "two dollars brokerage" smacked so strongly of my native haunts in the region of Capel Court that I should hardly have been sur-

prised if he had added an extra charge for "stamp and fee."

A few days later Waharda Aila went and brought the girl into Suakin. It was just my luck that I should be absent on a shooting expedition when she arrived, but Mr. Wills describes her as young, charming, lady-like, with pretty brown eyes, regular features, and an oval face. She had likewise an elegant figure and a voice of singular sweetness. I fancy that we could have sold her over in Jeddah at a figure which would have given us a handsome profit on the bargain. Only I am not quite sure if she had had the distemper, — I mean the small-pox. This, I ought perhaps to explain, makes a considerable difference in the price of this class of goods, as when they have once had the disease they are considered secure against a second attack. She was the widow of an Abyssinian colonel, and had been taken prisoner at her country house by a band of Dervish raiders who had killed her two little children and sold her into slavery. She appeared to have conceived in the course of their long journey down to the sea-coast a genuine attachment for Waharda Aila, and though in Suakin he was torn from her embraces by the action of a ruthless executive, I sincerely trust that their enforced parting will not be for ever.

It was somewhat embarrassing to have a young woman suddenly thrown on your hands in this unceremonious fashion, but Mr. Wills was equal to the occasion. In foreign parts, when in doubt go to the Consul. Accordingly our newest purchase was taken round to Mr. Barnham, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at Suakin, who entrusted her to the care of an Abyssinian residing in the town, and she lodged with him for the space of some months. As soon as the Egyptian authorities got wind of the matter they promptly arrested Waharda Aila and lodged him in the town-gaol on the charge of slave-trading, and it was with some difficulty

that we eventually procured his release.

Before quitting this interesting topic of native ladies and their admirers, I may mention the following curious custom which prevails among the tribes of the Eastern Soudan. When there are two rival suitors for the hand of a Hadendowa beauty they commonly agree to decide the issue by a peculiar kind of duel. The weapons are heavy *kourbashes* of hippopotamus hide, and the combatants, stripped to the waist, lay on until one of them sinks exhausted and bleeding to the ground. The fair prize herself looks on, and occasionally intervenes and puts an end to the fight. Dr. Junker alluding to this custom (*Travels in Africa*, p. 57) says that the victor in these combats acquires "the honourable title of *Akhu-el-benat*, or Defender of the Village Maiden, of which he is not a little proud." We never had an opportunity of witnessing one of these duels, though we were told that one had taken place in Suakin a few days before we arrived.

Two or three others of our traders came in soon after Waharda Aila. None of their experiences were so entertaining as his, but they all had similar tales to tell of robbery, official and unofficial, and of the lamentable state of things up country. They brought back money and various odds and ends of merchandise, but their transactions showed little profit. Trading with the interior, however, was a matter of secondary importance in our eyes. What chiefly occupied our attention was the cotton crop which was said to be growing for us in the Tokar Delta, and for the planting of which our agent had supplied the natives with seed. The cultivation of cotton is unquestionably the most promising and profitable industry in the Soudan. The plant was introduced from there into Egypt by Mehemet Ali, and excellent results were obtained from its cultivation in the districts round Suakin before the outbreak of the rebellion. There are estimated to be



over half-a-million acres of fertile land suitable for cotton growing in the Tokar Delta alone, which in the rainy season is copiously irrigated by the waters of the Khor Baraka.

It had been represented to us that we should be able to go down to Tokar to look after the crop ourselves. As a matter of fact, however, though Osman Digna gave us permission to trade with the inhabitants he peremptorily forbade Christians to set foot within the Delta, and commerce was obviously impossible under such conditions. The cotton was there undoubtedly, but how much of it were we likely to get? It struck me that the Dervishes were not likely to let us have much in any case, but, as it turned out, the crop never came to maturity. According to what the natives told us it was getting on very nicely, when lo! a great cloud of locusts issued forth, covered the face of the earth generally and our cotton-land in particular, and stripped the plants perfectly bare. Furthermore it was said that, some of the cultivators having omitted to fence in their land properly, what the locusts ate not, the camels devoured. I was not aware that the camel fed upon cotton, though doubtless nothing comes amiss to that beast's voracious maw, from a brass-headed nail to a tin lobster-can. After blowing themselves out with our cotton the locusts appear to have taken wing eastwards. Surfeited, however, with over-much good living, they fell in a heap into the Red Sea, covering its waves so that a man might, metaphorically speaking, have walked dry-shod from one shore to another; and the air was filled with a savour too horrible for words to describe. Was it not written in the chronicles of the *St. James's Gazette* and other newspapers that a vessel passing through the Red Sea homeward bound in the summer of last year steamed for three whole days through a compact mass of the corpses of these insects? This may have been a slight exaggeration, but there can be no

doubt that this blight of locusts was a most extraordinary one, and from all accounts the visitation was entirely without parallel in recent years.

We received from time to time throughout the year letters, some of which were curious specimens of Oriental style, from native chiefs and merchants. Many of them are interesting as throwing light on the events which led up to the Egyptian advance and occupation of Tokar. The writers all professed themselves anxious to trade with and "serve" the Company, but they lived in perpetual dread of their masters the Dervishes. Hence political allusions were not very frequent in these letters, our correspondents being afraid of compromising themselves in case the documents fell into the hands of the Mahdists. The slightest suspicion of an intention to go over to the Egyptians would inevitably have been visited with death, or torture and mutilation. Just before the battle of Tokar Osman Digna decapitated several sheikhs who were supposed to be leaning to the side of the Government. His tyranny and barbarity had long been causing a strong feeling of discontent with the rule of the Dervishes, when the famine came and brought matters to a head. The growing spirit of disaffection was sedulously fanned by Mr. Wills, who lost no opportunity of pointing out the advantages, pecuniary and otherwise, which would follow from the expulsion of Osman and his emirs. These representations made a great impression, especially as the moral was usually pointed with copious distributions of *dhurra*. I was not surprised, therefore, when in the summer an offer was made by some of the sheikhs to raise a large force to drive out the Dervishes, if only the Company would supply them with food. This offer was reported to the Government, and to any one conversant with the state of the country and the wishes and aspirations of the natives, it was evident that the times were ripe for the



advance from Suakin which the authorities so wisely determined on. The best proof of the sentiments of the coast tribes on the subject of a change of government lies in the fact that none of them fought against the Egyptians at Tokar, and that the news of the victory was received with general rejoicing.

One of our most frequent correspondents was one Seyed Khamisi, a merchant of Tokar, who, having started life as a pedlar, a *walad el terek* or son of the road, had by superior cunning and industry gained a leading position among the native merchants. He used to talk very pompously about his influence in the Delta, the entire trade of which he professed to hold in the palm of his hand. The following are extracts from one of his more characteristic letters. We had written to him asking whether we could go down to Tokar in person :

I informed Taha el Magdub of your wish and he has no objection, but he fears some of the badly educated people, and he desires when El Emir Osman Abu Bakr Digna arrives to show your letter to him : and when our hearts are easy we will write to you. One lion can control a thousand foxes, but a thousand foxes cannot control one lion. So, when the lion [Osman Digna] comes he will distinguish between right and wrong, and between the weak and the strong, and you will be satisfied and your requirements executed. As for the merchandise and cotton-seed and its sowing, we inform you that this has been agreed upon by the order of the Lord of All, El Khalifa el Mahdi (peace be on his name) and of all his agents and sub-agents.

The phrase "badly educated people" would seem to have referred to the fanatical emirs whose thoughts were not of trading and the things of this life, but of the joys of Paradise after death in battle with the Kafirs. For such pig-headed bigotry and indifference to worldly interests Seyed Khamisi had the profoundest contempt. "As for the emirs," he wrote in a subsequent letter, "nothing is too silly for them. All they want is to die, no

matter how, as they want to go to Paradise, either by gunshot or starvation. But I, and many who are like me, who have wives and children,—we do not want to die. We want to live, and to eat and drink every day, and to trade, and to better the condition of the poor." Another sheikh, who was anxious to enter into trading relations with the Company, expressed himself similarly in the summer on the subject of the Dervish rulers. "Wallah !" he exclaimed, "we are all grateful to the Company. We will obey and serve you, and we wished to trade with you, but our emirs (may God abolish them !) put every obstacle in our way."

Moral reflections were scattered about some of Seyed Khamisi's epistles, such as : "My friend, the liar will not prosper. His time is short, and he will inherit baseness and condemnation and black faces among his fellow-creatures." He further assured us that the growing of cotton was a large business and required trustworthy agents like himself, "men who respect themselves, and have property, and like gain." None the less his effusions showed throughout the craft and tortuousness which seem almost inseparable from the Oriental mind. I do not know where Homer located his "blameless Ethiopians," but I feel very sure it cannot have been in the Tokar Delta ; for, unless the children of Ham have altered strangely for the worse since his day, the epithet seems most inappropriate.

There was one letter that we received, however, which was of an entirely different character, and, though it is of earlier date than the others, I think it deserves reproduction in full. Some of the sentences breathe a spirit of fervent Moslem piety, and there is a fine Covenanter-like ring about it throughout. One of the principal writers, Abu Girgeh, was known to us as a brave soldier and sincere Mahomedan, though he was less fanatically bigoted than most Moslems in the Eastern Soudan. He

used at one time to be a trusted emir of the Mahdi, but his larger views and more liberal opinions caused him to incur suspicion of favouring the Egyptians, and he fell into disgrace. The "attack of our auxiliary cavalry" refers to a skirmish which arose out of one of the numerous raids that were constantly taking place round Suakin at that time. The following is the text of the letter as translated to us :

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful, etc., etc. From the servants of their Lord, whose trust is in Him, Magdub Abu Bakr, Mohammed Othman Abu Girgeh, and from us the successor of the Mahdi (peace be upon his name, the inspired saint, our intercessor before God !) Achmed Rachma ; to Antonius Saad—may God lead him and convert his mind. Amen.

Now we have received your letter dated 8 Rabi II., and what you mentioned therein of the attack of our auxiliary cavalry near the circle of Suakin, and its results upon the protection of traders and of their goods in the ports both of Trinkitat and Akik, and what you have stated to the people of Suakin, namely, that this attack of our horsemen was made unknown to us.

Know thou that we have not overstepped justice and right, and that the peace which we agreed to, and accorded to all who may come to the Mahdist territory in the Eastern land [Eastern Soudan] and the districts of Massowah and Suakin, (whether they come with merchandise or alone, and whether they come from seawards or from landwards) it remains without objection or restraint, except as regards what is necessarily prohibited by the law of God [alcohol, etc.]; and we did not seize, and shall not seize, them or their goods ; for we are bound to them by our agreement as regards this peace. Let this suffice.

As regards this affair of our horsemen and its result, you must know that some of the Arabs who live about Ribat "lifted" our cattle like thieves, and we sent horsemen in pursuit direct, who overtook them near Suakin and killed those who stood and offered resistance, and recaptured the cattle and brought it back. Such is the punishment for the ungodly. That is what was done by our mounted men.

And as regards the government of this land, know thou that we trust in God and

place our reliance upon Him. He will support those who trust in Him, as is declared in His Holy Book in the words, "May the Lord be exalted : there is no creeping thing upon earth but He provides for its necessities."

As regards the letter of Seyed Khamisi, you should know that we have read it, and we heard what he had to say, and spoke to him and made him understand that every merchant who shall come from the coast or the interior alike has our protection, for the good and for the peace of God, and His Prophet, and His Mahdi ; and the Khalifa is our security. And now we inform them that trade is open just as it was before. Let this be known.

7 Rabi II. 1307. [end of October, 1889.]

As I have already explained, the opening of trade with the interior was in those days a delusion and a snare. The advance, however, from Suakin of the Egyptian troops, and the occupation of the surrounding country, has completely altered the complexion of affairs. The battle of Tokar marks the commencement of a new era in the Eastern Soudan. The coast tribes, sickened by long years of Dervish oppression and its attendant horrors, famine and bloodshed, are submitting quietly and cheerfully to the new order of things. If only the government are successful in establishing order and just rule their position is assured, and prosperity will be restored to the country. Above all it is essential that good faith should be kept with the natives, and past engagements and undertakings must be scrupulously adhered to if future military expenditure is to be kept within reasonable limits. Mahdism is a slowly dying cause. The religious element in it has long since spent its force among the peasantry, while its foundations as a political principle have been sapped by the misery and sufferings which the Arabs have had to endure, and for which it is largely responsible. Gradually, as the advantages of the new rule make themselves felt, fresh tribes will send in their submission, until at length the whole region north of Khartoum between the

Nile and the Red Sea falls into the lap of the Egyptian Government. We may anticipate spasmodic efforts from time to time on the part of the Dervishes to regain their lost prestige, but the secession of the coast tribes is a blow from which they can scarcely recover. South of the Mahdist capital their tenure of power is more secure. There the pinch of poverty has not been so severely felt owing to the excellent crops produced in Sennaar, and it may be many years before the forces of the Khalifa are finally expelled.

Let us take a peep forward into what I believe to be the not far distant future of the Eastern Soudan. In my mind's eye I see the Arab peasant for the first time sowing his crop in the sure knowledge that he will enjoy the reaping and the profit thereof himself. The ceaseless tribal warfare of the last ten years, which decimated the male population, has ceased. The shepherd, no longer as formerly a nomad from necessity, tends his flocks in tranquillity and peace. Practical, if unambitious, irrigation works have made many waste places productive. At Suakin there is a moderate trade; not the vast system of commerce of which some enthusiasts have dreamed, but enough to keep several firms in business. "Little by little" should now be the motto of the Soudan trader. Let the comparative failure which has hitherto attended the two ambitious schemes of the East African Chartered Company act as a warning.

In the days of which I am speaking there will have been a revolution in the system of transport. The camel will have been partially superseded by the locomotive. The railway to Berber will then be an accomplished fact. Abyssinian young ladies, no longer captive but free, will be able with their lovers to take third-class return tickets

from Khartoum to Suakin. The resources of civilisation will make themselves felt more and more. Penny steamboats will be plying on old Nile between Omdoorman and Khartoum. The Mahdi will be deposed, and Mr. Thomas Cook, who has already annexed Lower Egypt to his extensive domains, will reign in his stead. Enterprising tourists will be personally conducted to the great lakes and the Bahr al Ghazal. Cheap trips will be organised up the Blue Nile into Abyssinia, Macadamised roads will thread the now trackless forests and swamps, and where once the camel swung by with slow and noiseless tread the scream of the locomotive will scare the lion and the elephant from their lairs. The slave-trade will be attacked at its fountain-head. The hydra-headed monster is but barely scotched now, but in the days that are to be it will have received its death-blow. The administrative genius of the English race, to which the prosperity of Egypt now bears silent witness, will achieve fresh triumphs in a wider field. Another outlet for the teeming millions of Europe will be found in the salubrious valleys and plateaux of Equatoria, and "British spheres of influence" will extend from the Cape of Good Hope to the Mediterranean.

It is a golden dream from one point of view, though the lifting of the veil of mystery which till lately has shrouded the recesses of Africa cannot but give rise to certain saddening reflections. Meanwhile, whether for good or for ill, the old order is rapidly giving place to the new. Civilisation marches onward with resistless tread, and the vast territories of the Eastern Soudan, temporarily abandoned to anarchy and barbarism, are now about to enter upon the new destiny which is reserved for the entire African Continent.

HUGH E. M. STUTFIELD.

## TRYPHENA AND TRYPHOSA.

### 1.

TRYPHENA joined the Army of Salvation because she knew of no larger field for display and publicity than the one to be found within its ranks. Therefore, you perceive, her knowledge of life was limited. She had a clear voice and no shyness whatsoever, two capital necessities for a lass who seeks advancement. And Tryphena always meant advancement. She had no conception of being left behind in life. Advantage to herself was the goal of her existence. Her beauty was perhaps rather a drawback in the profession of struggling saints, but it might not be regarded as an entire disability if there were extenuating circumstances of piety attached to her conduct. Tryphena of course had resolved that her piety should distinguish her from her fellows. She was not of the rank and file in any profession.

Tryphosa joined the Army for very different reasons. The first one was that her twin sister had elected to follow in its paths, and her life apart from that beloved sister was but a poor and starving thing. As much as Tryphena desired her own advancement, so much did Tryphosa desire it for her. And this other twin had a soul tinged with a devout colour, a colour of a primary nature, undimmed by any complementary shade of ambition or self-interest. This is rare in any sort of piety.

The twin sisters were exceedingly fair to see, bearing a strong resemblance to each other in the calm Madonna style, with smoothly rippling hair and deep grey eyes. The only difference was this: Tryphena's eyes said a good deal in the way of tenderness and beseechment, and meant next to nothing at all; Tryphosa's said not so much, but meant considerably more. This

last one had the soul of some far off ancestress who had been sincere and righteous and pure of heart; and Tryphena had the looks and outward expression of the same remote lady, looks which corresponded to the soul from which they were now divided.

The Twins had been camp-followers of the Army from their childhood, not so much willingly as of necessity. At an early stage of their existence Mr. Paul, their now deceased parent, had dressed them up in miniature uniform, poke bonnets, serge frocks and requisite badges, and so attired had drawn attention to himself leading them, one on each side, to the roll-call and the Sunday gatherings. At such meetings he sang hymns fervently and testified to his own satisfactory security in the Bank of Eternal Life.

The infantile grace of the little pair attracted many eyes, and many motherly hearts in the assemblies yearned over the exquisite childhood protected but feebly by a wild-eyed visionary.

During the early girlhood of the Twins this protector disappeared for some considerable time without any explanation as to his sudden departure. Tryphosa, little mystic, ever credulous of the miraculous, had secretly cherished the belief that some chariot of fire had removed her parent from the scene of his earthly labours. This belief was subsequently rudely dispelled by his re-appearance in a common cab and in a by no means spiritualised form. His face and figure had undergone alterations and, it must be allowed, improvements. His hair, formerly neglected (for in this matter the Army does not always conform to order), had more than a military closeness of cut about it, and his figure had put on flesh in a really considerable way, testi-

fyng, at least, that he had not been called upon to exercise self-denial or rigorous abstinence during his temporary removal.

But Mr. Paul was silent in the presence of his children regarding any new experiences of exile, and only prayed more abundantly for his enemies, leading the Twins to suppose he had been at the mercy of his foes. As a matter of course the Army received him back and the whisper "deserter" never, at least, reached his children's ears. Still they took notice that his offices had fallen from him in his absence, and that his oratory no longer graced the customary platform.

A period of rigid abstinence and self-denial ensued, and before many weeks he fell away from plumpness. As the leanness came upon him his religious fervour, or fanaticism, became more marked. He continually pointed out to the girls the significant names he had given them; Tryphena and Tryphosa "who labour in the Lord." And as he worked himself into a frenzy of exalted enthusiasm and gave vent to prophecy, the Twins would be driven in fear and trembling to the shelter of some neighbour's rooms. Night after night he disturbed them with wild mutterings, and in his dreams fought fearful conflicts with the Powers of Evil. A few months more found him sunken-eyed, hollow-cheeked, and exhausted. The spiritual unrest seemed to eat up his flesh, the fire of religious ardour to consume his very life. And then one night, after a day spent in much mental excitement, Mr. Paul fell fainting in the street, a stream of blood pouring from his pale lips. The cerebral agitation had been too much,—he had burst a blood-vessel. He was carried to the nearest hospital, and there with his last audible breath he consigned the Twins to the care of the Army. That was the end of a strangely complex piece of humanity. When this poor Paul was not a fanatic he was a criminal. Extremes meet perilously. His moods of spiritual exaltation had

for years alternated with outbreaks of crime, when he was hardly responsible for his actions. This human amalgam was charged with potent forces which made him an almost involuntary actor in the periodical fits of zeal and attacks of vice by which he was seized. Can we judge such as these by the laws applied to ordinary flesh and blood?

Out of such parentage what could be expected to come but vice and insanity? Yet stay! Was there not the far-off ancestress to be reckoned with? Her virtue, her transcendent purity, no less than her noble features, generations of erring descendants had not been able to wear out. The fair image had not been debased by the alloy of impure blood, and the worthy spirit had passed on pure and undefiled through many an unworthy life. There was a strain of this same virtue still existent, nay quick with life, in the young Tryphosa's soul.

## II.

THE girls were in due course put out to service under the auspices of the protecting Army, and the brigadier himself took occasional note of their welfare. But the Christian families with which their lot was cast (small tradespeople for the most part) did not carry their devotion into the minute details of every-day practice. They kept salvation as a thing apart, chiefly to be taken out on Sundays and at special meetings. Therefore the house of bondage was at times very grievous to endure.

Tryphena found the washing and dressing and feeding and carrying out of five unwholesome children more than uncongenial tasks. Her beautiful placid brow concealed no motherly thoughts or instincts, and she hated the life which held no beauty or variety. There was hardly time to dress herself, much less to brush her long abundant hair and to see to the making of her clothes. As for Tryphosa she would have scrubbed floors and dishes with endless patience if she might have been permitted to live in



the same house, or even in the same street, with her sister. Occasionally to catch a glimpse from her scullery window of Tryphena's ankles, as she wheeled a perambulator down the pavement, would have been bliss enough to content her loving heart. But it was not to be. They were far divided and in different service, and she pined secretly for her twin sister.

One Sunday the pair took counsel, as they were seated together on one of the benches in Holland Walk. The nursemaid lived at Notting Hill and the scullery wench was located at West Kensington. This spot was therefore selected as a happy point of meeting, and one with the advantage attached to it that they were able to sit down.

Thus, shoulder to shoulder on the friendly bench, the fair young sisters drew the attention of more than one passer-by. They were singularly alike as to features, singularly unlike as to dress. One wore cheap flowers in her hat and kid gloves; the other wore no gloves at all and had crowned herself with a sailor-hat of infinitesimal proportions—the cast-off headgear of her mistress. Somehow this sailor hat, surmounting the refined face and pale brown hair, had a curiously incongruous appearance. A second glance provoked a smile from some who passed by.

"Have you got half-a-crown to spare, Phosa dear? I'm clean run out again to-day." This was how an interview always began or ended.

Of course "Phosa dear" dipped her rough little hand deep down into a capacious pocket. She brought therefrom a brass thimble, a folded handkerchief, a door-key and a match box before she grasped her shabby little purse. Phena quickly turned it inside out, and her calm eyes brightened somewhat because there was an odd shilling and three halfpence over and above the sum demanded. Her hand closed so tightly over it that the cheap glove split itself down the middle.

"You don't mind, dear?"

Of course the "dear" shook her

head vehemently with a soft smile of denial. How could she say now that she had intended the purchase of a new hat?

"I've been thinking," said the Twin with the more beseeching eyes, looking down sadly at the rent in the kid glove, "that I've had enough of service."

"Oh, Phena! And such a lovely baby as it is."

"Lovely? Ah, you don't have it by night times." Which was an undeniable proof of a baby's excellence or otherwise.

Tryphena appeared to have forgotten that she had herself selected the situation of nursemaid in preference to one of washer-up, as being better paid and a more genteel occupation, less likely to soil the hands. This young person took great care of her hands, which were beautiful, in natural accordance with other physical perfections. "And," went on the leisurely voice which was refined and harmonious, "I've been thinking that I'll go in a shop and join the Army."

"What?" The sailor-hat tilted forward.

"Join the Salvationists?"

"Why, I thought you hated every one that belonged to it!"

"So I do, but I don't hate them so bad as babies and being tied up of an evening."

Tryphosa looked away. She did not understand—she never had understood—her sister's hatred of rule and restraint and her restless desire to act a prominent part on life's busier stage. Her own soul spoke otherwise of submission and humility. Nevertheless the Army meant notoriety in its more respectable form, and well accorded with her personal pious yearnings.

"Poor father, he wished us to work for the Army," she said gently, as if to extenuate or conceal the possibility of any other reason in Phena's mind.

"Oh," said the other Twin with a majestic elevation of her head, equivalent to any amount of contemptuous utterance, "don't remind me of him!"

I sha'n't grow ugly and thin like some of them do." She glanced round with superb disdain of such a possibility. A couple of shop-boys lounging past with cheap Sunday cigars between their lips cast an admiring glance at the speaker as her clear voice reached their ears. The girl chilled their too expressive gaze with a level glance, and they moved on more quickly.

"We could be together more often," said the less objective Twin, not having observed this irrelevant incident.

"Why?" said Phena with almost a touch of sharpness. "You didn't think about going too?" It would be very much pleasanter if the little washer-up stood afar off as an admirer, remaining willing to supply half-crowns at short notice. Tryphena did not lose sight of the possibility that the Army might otherwise hold the monopoly of superfluous coins.

"Oh, yes," said the Madonna in the sailor-hat with great fervour. "I'll join too. It's only you that have kept me back."

And so it was settled, and a little quiver about the nostrils was all that betrayed the other girl's dissatisfaction. Tryphena took an omnibus back to Notting Hill, but Tryphosa walked with an empty pocket all the way to West Kensington and was duly scolded for being out after hours.

### III.

A FEW Sundays later the Twins, being released from servitude, appeared at a public gathering and subsequently became regular attendants. They were a pair of conspicuous figures,—tall, and one almost stately—with a certain distinguishing air of expectation and freshness about their behaviour. They were not familiar with the other members of the meeting, and were backward in religious comments and responses. Original sin might yet be detected by a discerning eye in the elaborate plaiting of Tryphena's pale brown hair and in the faultless cut and

fit of her serge gown. Gloves she no longer wore, but the absence of these only drew attention to the shapely hands she took such care of.

One Sunday, towards the end of the summer, this branch of the Army was holding a preliminary out-door service in an open space of ground not yet given over to the builder. This plot was the centre of many converging streets, and drew together from the four quarters a number of poor and degraded creatures on the look-out for some Sunday afternoon recreation. At the first sound of this roll-call the crowd began to come up to the noise where they knew salvation was cheaply advertised. The standard being unfurled, the drums and tambourines set to work, and helped to stir up the enthusiasm of the lukewarm spectators.

It was Tryphosa's task to walk about the outside edge of the crowd and to dispose of a sheaf of newspapers. "A Cry, sir?" she said to each newcomer with a certain timid deprecation of a rude denial. Tryphena, having the distinguishing gift of a voice, had been selected this afternoon for solo singing of hymns. This task brought her prominently into notice, to her own satisfaction. But she did not betray her pleasure, only with an easy graceful dignity took up a prominent position in the centre of the circle. There was something really imposing about the tall straight figure clad in heavy serge that took thick folds about her. The lofty carriage of her noble head was more striking as she sang, and the chorus of warriors joined in at the end of the hymn with more than customary force and fire. Surely the circle of men and maids had never enclosed a more beautiful recruit! Tryphosa paused to join in the chorus as she edged round the crowd. Her pulse quickened with a mingled rapture of enthusiasm and thanksgiving. She had no desire to occupy her sister's place, but she perceived, or thought she perceived, that this lovely creature, her own flesh and blood,

was leading others in the way of salvation. A strange gladness overwhelmed her and her eyes filled with happy tears.

A voice behind her arrested her attention,—a languid gentlemanly voice.

“By Jove! what a beautiful girl. Too handsome for salvation,—in this form.”

Another voice made answer, “Her heart’s not in it. This occupation won’t last her long. Watch her.”

And Tryphosa, with all her happy ardour checked, watched also. She did not see so much as the men saw,—how could she, pure soul?—but she noticed that as Tryphena sang her eyes strayed round the circle. She was not absorbed in her task, but quite sensible of many admiring glances cast towards her. With a sort of resentful indignation of their watchful speculations Tryphosa turned to the two men behind her.

“Buy a *Cry*, sir?”

The younger man looked at her and started perceptibly. The older man placed some coppers in her hand and signed away the paper she offered.

“She is my sister, sir,” she said with a deep blush rising. It was as if she was constrained to acknowledge she had heard their conversation. Then she passed on.

By and by came the period for soliciting contributions. A *War Cry* was laid down in the centre of the circle and pennies and halfpennies were tossed in from outside and heaped upon this informal altar.

Tryphena, having finished her solo, walked back calmly to a place she selected in the throng. The young man who had taken notice of her beauty stood near that spot. She cast a full and comprehensive glance towards him as she approached, and she knew that he did not belong to that uncouth and uncultured throng. What had arrested him here? As the collector’s requests for contributions grew more urgent the girl inclined her head to those nearest her and solicited

pence. What more natural than for her to turn to the gentlemanly spectator? “And you, sir?” she said holding out her white hand in a calm way, a way so far removed from shyness and yet certainly not bold. Still looking at her intently he placed a silver coin in her hand. Tryphena advanced and laid the money on the paper, and the collectors noting the zeal of their recruit smiled approval on her contribution.

#### IV.

It was a chilly night. A gusty October evening with squalls of cold rain at intervals,—a night when macintoshes were imperative and umbrellas impossible. The more zealous soldiers had gone out into the highways, unmindful of any inclement elements, and had compelled or persuaded many to come in. Tryphosa had in wind and storm fulfilled her allotted task, and her *Cries* being all disposed of, she carried a pocket weighty with pence to the spot where she expected to meet her sister. She had not seen her this week, for all her leisure time had been occupied by her soldierly duties, and she hungered for the sight of the beloved sister and waited with a heart warm with affection. The stragglers going to the meeting passed her and swept into the building near at hand, but still Tryphena did not come. The Hallelujah Lasses spoke to the patient watcher as they passed, giving her the time and bidding her not to tarry. She took no heed of their admonitions and remained with her eyes fixed intently on the darkness at the end of the street. How the wind roared! how the lamps flickered! Down came the rain once more and the girl sought shelter on a friendly doorstep. The rain ceased, and overhead she could see a momentary rift in the cloud and one little star shining. A blare of brass instruments was swept towards her from the adjacent building. Mechanically and in an undertone she joined in the chorus of the hymn,

We sound aloud the jubilee,  
Mercy's free, mercy's free !

She strained her eyes till they ached. Tryphena had never been so late before. Surely two figures paused under the farthest gas-lamp,—two figures, not one. Then the angry wind swept Tryphosa's wet bonnet-strings across her eyes and a moment's stinging pain ensued. The tears blinded her; when she looked about her again the dear sister was close at hand, approaching solitary.

"It was you then,—under the gas-lamp," said Tryphosa breathless, "and come one with you !"

The eyes of the truthful ancestress looked steadily into Tryphosa's own. "Some one with me! Why, you're dreaming."

And the Twin who had the soul of the ancestress which never lied, thought that the night shadows and the driving rain had deceived her with false shapes.

The good work within the building went merrily forward that night; many declared their salvation, and half-a-dozen sitting on the Penitent Form bewailed their earlier state of darkness and peril. Tryphena also stood up and gave evidence of righteousness, testifying in a way that stirred all hearts; and the worshippers, poor working men and women, unacquainted with any subtle influence of culture and refinement, were yet moved to tears and spiritual anguish by the sight of the beautiful creature, with the face of an angel, who had come among them to seal their convictions. With loud accord the throng of yearning humanity gave voice to a rapturous chorus of praise and thanksgiving. Overcome with emotion, with eyes shining with that strange spiritual light which too often forebodes fanaticism, Tryphosa passed silently from the building and went home. Her heart was too full to hold human intercourse, and yet she had not testified to any moving grace. Tryphena, calm and collected, waited to receive

the adulation of the officers, for praise and honour it was to her to be marked out in that large assembly. A young captain, devout in good works, escorted the girl home through the stormy night and parted with her on the doorstep of the shop with the customary fervent blessing, which was not altogether impersonal.

A day or two later the end came,—the end of this girl's services to salvation. The lass who stood up high for promotion after such short service disappeared. The beautiful Tryphena came no more to the gatherings, and was lost sight of in the great outside world.

The captain sought out Tryphosa and questioned her closely in a peremptory manner. Over and beyond the interests of the Army he had a private concern at heart. The girl quivered and trembled beneath the rough touch laid on her heart-strings. How could she bear this suspicion of evil which like a dark cloud now encompassed the missing one?

They knew nothing of Tryphena at the shop where she had served. She had given a week's notice and had gone away alone in a cab, taking all her small possessions with her. A terrible presentiment,—a doubt she had never taken out and looked at fairly—rose up in the troubled sister's mind. Tryphena had asked for no money for a long time, and once, a few weeks back, when Tryphosa had borrowed her sister's Bible a play-bill had discovered itself therein,—a play-bill of recent date. And then the dream, or vision of Tryphena parting with a man beneath the gas-lamp,—was it a reality after all? With a stricken soul the Salvation Lass went about her daily tasks and waited, praying without ceasing. There was no one to help her. Such things had happened before in the Army, and the gap filled up and the deserter was speedily forgotten. Tryphena had gone away willingly, and by and by she might appear again. She had tired of it all, as she had tired of

other things before. To her there was no law of worthiness and perfection incumbent on her, if there was no advantage in it. Something better in the way of occupation, some yet greater prominence had presented itself, and doubtless Tryphena, true to her nature, had gone after it. She would write or come again in due time. So the unhappy sister, making the best of the fallible points she knew so well, endeavoured to shield herself from the worst doubt of all.

## V

It was spring-time and Hyde Park was joyous in sunshine and renewed vernal life. A gay crowd was gathered together this forenoon, along the footway of Rotten Row, the majority more concerned with each other's appearance than interested in the display of hyacinths and budding trees. Leaders of fashion showed the marvellous ways of dress to women of less social importance, apt disciples in this direction, and the wave of gossip and scandal gathered and broke with its usual destructive force.

A Salvationist Lass, intent on some errand of mercy, had found this the shortest road to her destination. She threaded her way through the fashionable crowd, attracting little notice beyond an occasional indulgent smile. Yet she was very delicate and refined in appearance, tall and slender, with an almost ethereal fragility. There was a far-away unreal look in her eyes, which seemed to rest always beyond the throng, but something singularly attractive about the tender curves of her lips.

At the end of the Row a yet denser crowd was packed on chairs or stood about in friendly chat. Still she pressed forward, passing between them all without pausing to glance at any. Her mission was not here, or to any such as these. She breathed more freely as she came out of the press and paused a moment to draw a strong

sigh. Her work was heavy, and spiritual exhaustion as well as bodily had crept over her. A year had gone by, and no voice of kith or kin had spoken to her.

She shaded her eyes from the too dazzling sun as she stood, about to cross the road, at Apsley House. As she paused a prancing pair of black horses and a well-appointed victoria clattered over the stones at the corner. She stood so near that the dust from the wheels soiled her dress. Mechanically her eyes fell upon the occupant of the carriage,—a beautiful girl wearing an air of calm pride. The beautiful girl's glance swept over the passers by, travelled on slowly and met the wild awakened look of the Salvation Lass,—the look of one who sees visions and dreams dreams. They might have touched each other at that momentary exchange of looks, but the lady's carriage passed on and her drooping parasol lowered a moment over her stately head. Then the other fell fainting in the sunshine.

## VI.

MORE years went by and Tryphosa's heart and hand never slackened in the work she had chosen. Her pity and labour were given to sinners, to sinners of the worst sort. She practised daily works of atonement for the sins of others,—for the sins of one other now far removed from her. Self-sacrifice, the perilous rock of many creeds, was in all her thoughts and actions. She dwelt upon the possibility of expiation and atonement for another till the idea became fatally fixed. Hereunto she was called, and sooner or later the allotted task would be clearly pointed out. Thus, in the exaltation of her more spiritual moods, her reason was confounded and her mind unhinged by a mystical belief. A religious martyrdom might crown her life and prove an act of reparation for another. Alas! alas! So far however she had kept her hold of life's sad realities. When physical suffer-



ing or material wants called out for practical assistance she was ready to give help. And this poor saint seemed to draw towards her many broken-hearted and sorrowful souls, comforting them with the promise of eternal rest. None should ever be cast out, none should be rejected from grace. Was not that consolation and assurance the very foundation and bulwark of salvation?

For three successive nights Tryphosa had waited and watched outside a squalid lodging-house in the worst part of Westminster. She had waited patiently for the regular appearance of a woman, young so far as could be judged from her gait and figure, yet a woman who went down nightly to the Embankment. She came again and yet again, and watched the black shining waters under the intense starlight of a wintry sky. Not nights for any loiterers were these. And each time this tall and stately creature, shrouded in an old shawl, went away with a rapid step and a mind made up, —not that night, no, not that night! Then Tryphosa would creep home silently to her own resting-place.

But the last hope had fled, and now, with frost in the air and snow upon the ground, the grisly King beckoned down to the water's edge once more. Tryphosa had seen the woman turned from her lodgings, and she knew what would happen next, what had happened in such cases before. Now the creature without hope sat upon a deserted bench with her poor clothing all huddled around her. She was waiting, calm and still, till all footsteps near her died away. When that happened she would steal along the wall unobserved, and lose herself for evermore in a still greater silence. Tryphosa knew. Had she not seen this sort of thing at this spot before? Her intuition and sympathy told her that the woman, who had settled herself quietly to an apparent rest, was waiting with wide-eyed misery, waiting with all her life like a moving slide passing before her in those last heart-beats of anguish.

The big clock struck one, and the Salvation Lass moved backwards and forwards to keep herself warm and the woman was conscious of her presence. The big clock struck two, and a policeman on his beat paused to glance at the pair of women. He recognised the situation instantly and moved away, trusting in that faithful silent sentinel. And all the time Tryphosa waited she nerved herself for her task, the fire of zeal burning hot within her. The fierce enthusiasm of faith and longing set her pulses beating fast.

On the strike of three the woman on the bench stirred and drew the old shawl around her. The Salvation Lass had walked a little further off than before. The woman watched her stealthily. It was a black night and the gas lamps were far apart. Noiselessly she slipped to her feet and passed like a shade to the wall which hid the river. She laid hold of the stone work with one hand, as if to steady herself, and then she dropped the shawl. On the other side it would be very cold, but she would need no covering. And the woman who had loved comfort and good days all her life, shivered as she thought of the depths. That pause was long enough to save her. A hand touched her, drew her back,—a wasted hand with very little strength in it. But the touch of it was like fire, and the startled woman shuddered.

"Let me go,—let me go!" she said hoarsely.

Tryphosa recoiled. This was more than she had expected. "'Tis you—at last—at last!" she cried in a voice that rang with triumphant joy. And in the gloom the sinner and the saint knew the bond of sisterhood between them.

"It is you, Phosa," sighed the woman, "here?"

"God has spared me for your salvation," cried the other one, and falling to her knees on the snowy pavement she offered up a wild rhapsody of praise. Tryphena turned away.

"I don't want to live to be pointed at. I won't be saved to take the lowest place."

"Repent—repent!" said Tryphosa still on her knees, clinging to her sister's skirt. "There is yet time."

"No, no, I do not repent. I will not creep upon my knees. There is no place for me in this world. Let me see the end of it."

Tryphosa lifted herself from the ground. "Die in sin? No, no!" She paused as if to gather her strength of utterance. "You need not creep upon your knees, but you shall be saved. I will redeem your soul."

The light of fanaticism flamed in her eyes. The sacrifice was close at hand. She lifted her hands to the sky, gazing upwards as if to fathom some kingdom of glory. "Lord, I give her to Thee. She shall take my place."

Then the woman who had sought to die, claiming extinction as a right of misery, looked at her sister, not in any way comprehending; the language she heard had grown utterly strange to her.

Tryphosa, with a haste unknown to her, flung off her Army jacket with its badge, and removing her bonnet, placed it on her sister's bare head.

"We are alike,—there's very few

can tell us apart when we're dressed the same. I'm readier to die than you. The Lord will promote me to glory,—greater love hath no one than this."

In such disconnected sentences she went on as she stripped herself of all Army tokens. Then she picked up the ragged shawl from the ground and wound it closely about her own form. Before Tryphena had clearly comprehended her intent, she kissed her, gave a loud clear shout, *Salvation!* and disappeared. The policeman hearing that loud cry came back quickly and found the girl in the Salvationist bonnet shuddering as she looked over the wall into the abyss.

"Too late, my lass, were you? Ay, they're very cunning when they're set on it. 'Tis a pity!" And with rough sympathy he lifted the girl's jacket from the ground and placed it on her shoulders.

And the woman went away as if cleansed of her sins, and the leaders recognised her only as Tryphosa. And the years went by and she found favour with the elders as a wise virgin whose light burned brightly. But there was one "promotion to glory" which never reached the knowledge of the Army.

H. M.

## THE GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC.

GERMANY honours Sedan Day, and France celebrates the glorification of destruction on the 14th of July; but England has no events in her history which she yearly commemorates, for Guy Fawkes' day, whatever it may have been once, has now sunk into a vulgarism and a nuisance. It is quite different, however, with the great English-speaking nation across the Atlantic. The fondness for national celebrations among the people of the United States may be due to their earlier adoption of democratic institutions, or to their close intercourse with France in the days of political alliance in the last century and of social and artistic imitation in the latter half of this, or again to the large mixture of other elements than English in the population; but whatever the cause, it certainly is a fact that the American delights in public ceremonial as much as an Englishman dislikes it. The Fourth of July Orations have passed into a proverb; and as the memories of the struggle with England have grown fainter, a new national festival has sprung up in Decoration Day, on which North and South unite to honour the graves of their dead soldiers, and to preserve the memories of the great Civil War. It is another commemoration of that terrible struggle, of a somewhat different kind, at which we happened to be present this year, and which seemed to us characteristic enough to be worth description, especially as to the majority of Englishmen probably, as to ourselves, it will be quite unfamiliar.

The Grand Army of the Republic is an association which was founded in 1866, a year after the close of the war; its ranks are open to all those who served under the Federal flag and who received an honourable dis-

charge. It took its rise in Illinois, a State which had played a most prominent part in the struggle, which had sent Lincoln to the White House, and which first appreciated the merits of Grant as a general. Its objects were to perpetuate those ties of friendship which had been formed in the smoke of battle, and to secure the interest of those who had suffered for the Union, while as regards the State it was intended to serve as a school of patriotism for the nation, by reminding the coming generation of the "brave days of old." Like everything else in the States, it has not been unaffected by the influence of the "politicians." Mr. Bret Harte dramatically sets forth this, and other objections to the movement, in his charming poem of *The Old Major Explains*.

And then for an old man like me, it's not  
exactly right  
This kind of playing soldier with no enemy  
in sight.  
The Union,—that was well enough way up  
to Sixty-Six,  
But this Re-Union,—maybe now it's mixed  
with politics.

But the memories of Spottsylvania are too much for the old man's scruples, and he yields to the invitation to meet his comrades once more; and as in the poem, so in real life, sentiment has triumphed over criticism, and the organisation has steadily increased in numbers till the present time. At the recent meeting in Detroit in the first week of August, it was reported that four hundred and fifty thousand veterans were now enrolled in its Posts, as the various lodges are called. Of course only a small portion of these come to any one gathering; but this year, as being the Silver Anniversary of the foundation of the order, a special effort was made, and it was

estimated that more than fifty thousand veterans met in the great commercial city of Michigan.

Detroit is well adapted for such a gathering. It is very spacious for a city of two hundred and fifty thousand people, even in the great West where cities are laid out on the grand scale, and owing to a happy inspiration on the part of its designer, who also laid out the "magnificent distances" of Washington, it succeeds in attaining regularity of plan without that deadly uniformity of streets at right angles which makes Chicago as maddening as a gigantic draught-board. The centre of the city at Detroit is a small park from which the avenues diverge like the spokes of a wheel, while all round these the great mass of rectangularly arranged streets fits closely in. The profusion of trees and the broad Detroit river, which is the outlet to the Great Lakes, make the place as beautiful as a place can be in which every existing building has been put up within fifty years on an almost level plain. It is a point of honour in the States for each city to outvie its neighbours and rivals in its municipal displays; and public and private liberality in Detroit had subscribed nearly £30,000 for the reception of the Grand Army. This was of course independent of the sums expended by individuals on the decorations of their own houses; these were carried out on the most lavish scale, so far as size at least was concerned, though there was a curious lack of variety in the combinations of star-spangled banners or in the portraits of favourite captains. Among the last it was clear that Grant's career as a politician had somewhat injured his popularity as compared to that of Sherman or Sheridan, while Meade, the solid sensible soldier who won the decisive battle of Gettysburg, was hardly commemorated once; this is only one of many facts which seemed to show how little the real history of the great struggle had remained in the public memory. There could be no doubt

that in Detroit the visit of the Army was popular. Every house on the main streets was gaily decorated, and most of those on the side streets, while triumphal arches were erected at the most important points. Many of the fifty thousand veterans were accommodated in private houses, but for those who could not be so entertained, big camps were formed by the city; in one of the public grounds twelve thousand men of the Grand Army revived their experiences of war by sleeping under canvas. The streets during the whole week were extraordinarily gay, for besides the veterans it was estimated that one hundred and fifty thousand visitors were in the town, so that the population was nearly doubled. Almost every man was wearing a decoration of some kind, for the American carries out his fondness for ceremonial thoroughly. Besides the ordinary bronze medal of the Grand Army, and the cross of the Loyal Legion (which is worn only by ex-officers), there were endless ribbon badges, marking the Post to which a man belonged, his state, his position on the committee of reception or as the representative of some special interest. These marks were certainly picturesque, and added colour to the plain dark-blue brass-buttoned dress which is worn by the veterans, and which was the old undress uniform of the war-time; but to a European eye they rather lacked the simplicity proper to military decorations, and were too suggestive of the badges of Foresters' Lodges or of Good Templar Societies. An exception must be made for the cross of the Loyal Legion, which is as pretty as it is honourable, and is recognised as a badge of distinguished service in the highest military circles of Europe.

The crowds were everywhere good-humoured and well behaved; indeed their patience and order were most striking to a visitor. Drunkenness was extraordinarily rare; we only saw one drunken veteran in four days. In fact the teetotal zeal of some of the

good people of Detroit seemed quite unnecessary ; for a determined effort had been made by a small number of fanatics to have all intoxicating liquors excluded from the entertainment of the Army ; one obscure chapel had gone so far as to issue its protest,—with almost Papal arrogance, “in the name of Jesus Christ and more than one thousand Christian young men of Detroit.”

Certainly it is in a gathering of this kind that an Englishman can best learn what a Democratic country means. The absolute freedom from formality in all arrangements was a curious contrast to our home ceremonials. There were no cordons of policemen and officials to secure the privacy of distinguished guests or managing committees ; the crowd went wherever it pleased, and a stranger could pass unchallenged into the very head-quarters of the Grand Army, and be admitted, if he chose, to an interview with the commander-in-chief himself. The halls of the great hotels on the first day of the gathering were extraordinary sights, filled as they were with hurrying committee-men, with bands playing, with ever fresh arrivals of veterans ; while amid the confusion old friends recognised each other, and strangers were introduced, in an atmosphere thick with cigar smoke and good fellowship.

The gathering itself lasted four days, but it was only on the first two that there was much of the nature of public celebration. On the first day there was the great procession, which forms the chief feature of the proceedings. The Grand Army then is formally reviewed by its commander as it marches past ; but in order to give others a share in the sight, the march is continued through some of the main streets of the town. On this occasion the march was made too long, for the veterans were kept moving for more than two hours, without reckoning the time spent in mustering and waiting to start. This was a severe strain, on a hot August day, for men of whom

the youngest was well into middle age ; and hence a very considerable number did not march at all, or fell out after saluting the commander-in-chief. But the procession was still very imposing. Of course the numbers in it were most variously estimated by rival newspapers. We can only say that it was more than four hours between the passage under our window of the first and the last ranks ; and that after the first half-hour the halts were very rare and very short. The Ohio men especially made a gallant show ; for nearly forty minutes the representatives of the Buck-Eye State were defiling by, and it seemed as if the line of their yellow flags would never end. It was evident that the native State of Grant, of Sherman, and of Sheridan, was very loyal to the cause which they had led to victory.

The procession at once was and was not very imposing. In all essentials it was a most striking sight ; for most of the regiments marched exceedingly well, and as a rule went by with lines well locked up and a firm step which would not have discredited the Regulars of any army in Europe. And even to a visitor it was a most striking thought that these men, after seeing as much and as hard fighting as any soldiers of our time, had returned into civil society and settled down as peaceful citizens. There had been nothing quite like it in history since Cromwell's Ironsides broke themselves up and returned to give bone and sinew to English life. Nor were there lacking memorials to aid the mind in realising where these men had been, and what they had seen. Many Posts carried by the old battle-flags of their former regiments, with the bullet-rent rags hardly clinging to the pole. One relic was especially interesting ; before the Wisconsin men was carried the stuffed form of the famous eagle “Old Abe,” which attached itself closely to one of the regiments early in the war and went unharmed through all the hard fighting with the soldiers of the Badger State, and which



was as cherished a comrade as the famous dog of the Fusiliers in the English army. The one hundred and twenty bands too, which were scattered at intervals through the procession, played well-known war-tunes, and the veterans stepped out more briskly than ever to the familiar strains of *Marching through Georgia*, or *Shouting the Battle-Cry of Freedom*.

But there were other elements in the procession which were less satisfactory. In the first place Democracy has its drawbacks from the point of view of spectacular effect. Instead of the close-kept lines of an English crowd, with mounted policemen at intervals, and even the dogs well in order, we had spectators who went pretty much where they pleased; they not only crossed the road freely in the spaces between the detachments, but, where the ranks were at all loose, actually went right through the detachments themselves. And the marching was at times very loose and slovenly; it was strange that any able-bodied men who had once fought so well, should now march so badly. But it was the lack of organisation which chiefly impaired the impressiveness of the sight. A procession, especially of dark uniforms, depends for its effect on its regularity. The proper depth of front was twelve; but the men went by in lines of every variety of strength, and sometimes even in open order,—a formation in which the best-drilled troops must be disappointing to the eye.

This lack of order was after all but a small matter. It is impossible to combine the maximum of popular enjoyment with perfect formality, or to insure uniformity of organisation in men gathered from every corner of a continent; and if the spectacle suffered in itself from being somewhat broken up, at all events more could enjoy it. What was more unfortunate was the lack of seriousness with which the crowd, and even the veterans themselves, seemed to regard the whole business. The

bands were the worst offenders in this respect. Their uniforms often looked like the cast-off wardrobe of a third-rate circus company; every army in Europe was, we will not say imitated, but parodied. There were bear-skin caps, cuirassier helmets, Zouave shakoes and costumes, and too many of them untidy and dirty. And while, as has been said, the bands often gave the real war-music, they still oftener indulged themselves in the marches of second-rate modern operas to the neglect of the historic tunes. Probably no single song did more for the Union Cause than *John Brown's Body*; yet it was not played once,—at any rate in our hearing.

And the veterans too seemed disposed at times to turn the whole affair into a jest. One Illinois Post went by under red, white and blue umbrellas, intended to represent the Star-Spangled Banner, though they had not even troubled themselves to get the number of the stars of the States right; others led along with them negroes in particoloured dresses, to serve them with water; women and girls in fancy costumes were also to be seen in the ranks. Such shows would be in place in Barnum's processions; but in a national celebration they struck a jarring note. And on the whole there was very little effort to bring out the historic significance of the scene. The old war-flags have been mentioned, and some of the States carried their peculiar emblems; the Minnesota men for example wore wheatears, the Kansas men sunflowers, the Texas men a great pair of horns, with the ridiculous inscription, *We never draw in our horns; they are too long*. But the Massachusetts men, who carried before each Post the banner of their State, were quite exceptional. Flags there were in plenty; but they were as a rule the trumpery pennons of individuals, or the brand-new gaudy banners of the different Posts, and not in the least historical or important. Some of our American friends did not seem to

notice anything wrong; to us the turning of the greatest war of modern times into an occasion for second-rate theatrical display was painful, and seemed to indicate something wanting in the nation's sense of its own dignity.

The great procession was followed in the evening by a series of meetings, which were addressed by ex-President Hayes (who had marched that day as a simple "comrade" in the ranks), the Secretary of War, and other notabilities. This year's gathering was saddened by the fact that since the previous August two more of the great captains of the Union had passed away; Sherman and Admiral Porter had died within a few days of each other, and now there is hardly a Northern general of importance left. The speaking was of a very ordinary character, good, but in no way proving the superiority of American to English oratory which Mr. Bryce assumes as a fact. There were two or three notes in the speeches which seemed unfortunate. One was the tendency to "talk tall." It is good neither for oratory nor for edification to tell an audience, as one of the speakers did, that the "Americans now were the best and noblest generation who had ever existed in that or any other land." Another was the injustice of attitude to the South. It is perhaps too much as yet to ask a Northern orator to drop the term "rebels"; but the fact might be recognised that Lee and Jackson were foes worthy of any man's steel, and that a full share of the honours of the war belonged to the conquered. There was a good deal too much of the "all-victorious" army of the Union; and even an old Northern sympathiser could not fail to remember that Chancellorsville and Fredericksburg were great names as well as Gettysburg and Appomatox. In short, the speeches were marked throughout by a tendency to sacrifice fact to sentiment; and it is not surprising if the present generation fail to know the true story of the

war, when its survivors prefer well-sounding generalities to plain straightforward reference to its actual facts, which it might be thought full enough of the lessons of heroism and patience to satisfy any orator. These gatherings lose the greater part of their value if they are not a living memorial to the younger generation that patriotism means blood and tears as well as the triumphant prosperity of the Union.

The last three days of the gathering were of a much less formal character, so far as concerned the great majority of the veterans, although on the second day there was a great free picnic provided by the city, and a grand display of fireworks. It was not unpleasant to English vanity to find that, in order to make these "the greatest show ever seen on either side of the Atlantic," recourse was had to the old country and to the well-known name of Pain. But picnics and fireworks are much the same all the world over, and the real interest of the gathering now centered in the informal reunions of the old regiments, and in the evening "camp-fires." There were two hundred of the former on the Wednesday alone. This reknitting of old friendships would almost by itself justify all the trouble and expense of these festivities; and certainly the veterans themselves think so. "Camp-fires" are meetings of a very informal character, in which the old war-songs are sung, and any soldier may relate his experiences. Unfortunately we could not attend any of them, but to judge by the war-stories of which the Detroit papers were full they must have been most delightful. It was, however, a shock to one's feelings to find them held in some of the principal churches of the city, though not in those of the Roman or the Anglican communions.

But the Grand Army is a great business organisation, and its officers had much to do besides reviving old memories. There was first of all the important question to settle of the

gathering-place for next year. This became almost a trial of strength between the older and the new States, for the two candidates were Washington and Lincoln (in Nebraska); even the names were significant, as there is undoubtedly a strong feeling in the West that Lincoln is to displace the first President as the national hero. On this occasion, however, the old city triumphed, though by a narrow majority of less than forty out of over seven hundred votes. The fact that Washington lay within easy reach of the most important battle-fields of the war undoubtedly decided the matter in its favour. There was much other formal business to discuss as to the position and the duties of the Grand Army; but the only other question of importance was whether black men and white should unite in the same Posts in the Southern States. A great number of Northern soldiers went after the war into the territory of the Confederacy, and it was very striking and significant to find the majority of them absolutely refusing to be now united with their coloured brethren-in-arms. The commander-in-chief in his report recommended that their prejudices should be recognised, and that separate Posts should be formed for white and for negro soldiers; but this recommendation was overruled, and it was decided by the delegates that all the soldiers of the Union should be on an equality, whatever their colour. It remains to be seen whether the Grand Army men of the South will carry out their threat, and secede from the organisation.

The gathering was universally pronounced to be the most successful that had been held; and it is certain that all who took part in it spent a most delightful week. But it must be added that there is in many quarters in the States a strong feeling against the Grand Army.

It is attacked mainly on two grounds, first as being a great political engine, and secondly as tending to keep alive the breach between North and South.

There is much to be said for both these objections, though they seem directed rather against the accidents than the essence of the organisation. As to the first, there is no doubt (the Americans themselves go out of their way to tell you of it) that under cover of honouring the veterans of the war, a great amount of political corruption has been carried on. The men who fought for the Union deserve all honour; but it is a scandal that now, after twenty-five years, the amount of pensions paid is heavier than it ever was, and (incredible as it may seem) is actually greater in amount than the sum expended by any of the great nations of Europe on its standing army; the annual outlay reaches nearly £2,000,000 in the one State of Michigan alone. Unfortunately this has been made a party question. A portion of the Democrat Press broadly insinuates that the Grand Army of the Republic is simply an instrument to enable the Republican party to get at Uncle Sam's pockets. On the other hand the Republicans retort, as we heard one of their candidates for the Presidency say at Detroit, that "those who now attack the pensions were during the war either in hiding or in Canada." It is to the credit of the Grand Army that at this last gathering it passed a resolution against using its organisation for political purposes; and speaking as strangers, we can only say that, unless we have been peculiarly fortunate in the Grand Army men we have met (and they were many and of all ranks), it is a libel on the very great majority of them to accuse them of self-seeking either for themselves or their party.

As for the second objection, that the feud with the South is kept alive by such celebrations, it does not seem necessary that this should be so. Both sides (with a very few exceptions) now rejoice in the issue of the war; it should surely be possible to commemorate without bitterness the exploits of their own heroes, while doing full justice to the bravery and the

cause of the other side. A generation or two will bring a time when they will be able to unite even more closely; for history will certainly repeat itself in America, and the granddaughters of the men who fought in the trenches at Vicksburg and died in the "death-angle" at Spottsylvania, will sing sympathetically the *Bonnie Blue Flag*, and *Dixie's Land*, just as, one hundred years before in Great Britain, Bonnie Prince Charlie and Bonnie Dundee became the heroes of Scotch lassies whose grandfathers had never mentioned their names without a prayer that was very like a curse.

And, if foreigners may speak on the matter, the advantages of the Grand Army celebration are obvious. Cruel as the American War was, and terrible as were the losses it involved, it yet brought out in a way, unsuspected even by themselves, the true fibre of the American nation. During this century they had enjoyed a career of uninterrupted prosperity, chequered only by an indecisive war with England, and a successful but not very glorious war with Mexico. Suddenly, by the great struggle for the Union,

they were brought for the time into the ranks of military nations, and the world learned that the new English fighting blood was no degenerate scion of the old. We may condemn war as much as we will, but it certainly brings the poetry into the history of a nation; and it may be said further that a nation which ceases to know how to fight, will soon cease to know how to prosper. There is no danger in America of the peaceful virtues which bring success being neglected; there is some danger (its own citizens think) of the coming generation having too easy a life owing to their great material prosperity. So success may well be wished to the Grand Army in its endeavour to keep green the memory of those who, in the words of the gifted writer whom we have lately lost, and who perhaps more than any other man represented the noblest feelings of the North during the war,

Whose faith an' truth  
On War's red techstone rang true metal,  
Who ventured life an' love an' youth  
For the gret prize o' death in battle.

## IN PRAISE OF MOPS.

THE varieties to be found in the character of dogs have always appeared to us a most interesting study. What degrees of morality, intelligence, self-control do we not observe in their different families, from that narrow and uncertain-tempered specialist, the greyhound, to the universally popular and trusty fox-terrier whom you can "do anything with," as the saying is! This axiom means in particular that the habitual companion of so many Englishmen is, like that equally respectable creature the retriever, susceptible of discipline to no ordinary degree. Many a humane man has held up a terrier of the fox or bull type and beaten the animal as he loved it, and till his arm ached. Nor is it to be supposed that such a dog (whom we have seen struggle after an angry swan in mid-stream and triumphantly pull its tail feathers out) is exactly afraid to retaliate. The same may be said of the curly black brute (capable of carrying a good-sized child in his mouth) whom the keeper chastises to an accompaniment of "Ah! Ratt-ell you *breeute!* Wood-jerrr!" There are dogs of course, such as the wolf-hound that killed the unfortunate Frenchman the other day, that one would hesitate to chastise for the reason that Kingsley gives, in respect of the hero of his famous ballad:

The clerk that should beat that little  
Baltung,  
Would never sing mass again!

But as there are human natures, and those not always the worst, that do not take "punishment" kindly, so are there canine natures. The difference lies in a more refined sensibility both of soul and skin, and perhaps in a rarer, more feminine, if one may say so, and more spiritual nature.

Of such sort is the dog of whom we

write. Mops is one of those long-haired terriers whom to know is to love. No one could ever venture to beat him; he would probably go wild with fright or passion; as it is, he has hardly ever had a rough word spoken to him. Mops is nevertheless in ordinary circumstances as good as gold. If his sensitive temper be ever hurt, that is generally the fault of some person who has approached him either without proper introduction, or in a manner unsuited to his dignity. It is his habit to mark these occasions by pretending not to know his dearest friends, as they pass while he lies on his particular mat in the hall; or (in very extreme cases) by retiring to the housekeeper's room, much to the elation of that elderly dignitary, and growling from the low and cushioned window-sill at all who venture into his presence with overtures of friendship. There are points in his character which, in such an animal, it is hopeless to attempt to alter; but these are not the low or mischievous tricks of common dogs. He would scorn to run after a chicken or a sheep. Once he caught a very little rabbit on the front lawn and brought it with tender fondlings, yet half alive, to bed with him in his basket by the drawing-room fire, whence the horrified housemaid removed its corpse during his absence at dinner-time. He has also been confronted with a live rat with which, though exasperated by its want of humour, he for long endeavoured to play, till it bit him, when there was an abrupt end of the game, and of the rat. But Mops has decided instinctive notions about how certain things ought to be done, and equally decided aversions to certain people. To Mr. Buller, the local banker, who comes over to



dine regularly once a fortnight, he will never be more than severely civil. Mops' olfactory nerves have doubtless informed him of this gentleman's secret preference for fox-terriers, of which an adorable specimen is, at home, cherished in his bosom ; but there possibly are other reasons.

We have not mentioned yet that Mops is as beautiful as the day, though this is not a very appropriate simile for one whose first appearance suggests a chaotic heap, or dancing cloud, of dusky hair through which now and then you catch the sparkle of two gleaming dark-brown eyes. Such he appears (for his affections and enthusiasms are unbounded, and his conduct, when pleased, of the frantic order) bounding or rather rippling down the stairs to fly into the arms of some welcome arrival, or (supreme joy !) to be taken out for a walk by the right person. At such a moment he will fling shrieking up and down the passage and over and under the furniture like an animated football ; but when he stops dead short, or jumps upon your knees, shakes back his hair (which is really silver-gray, almost sky-blue in a strong light) with a prodigious effort, and grins ecstatically in your face, showing all his splendid teeth and preparing to inflict a vigorous kiss upon any unprotected feature, then indeed not the famed Peloton of Du Bellay,

*Faisant ne sçay quelle feste  
D'un gay braulement de teste,*

was more bewitching. Having mentioned the subject of teeth, we must add that one of the greatest pleasures of Mops' life is to "play at rats" with some competent human friend. This pastime (which is only allowed on the old leather settle in the smoking-room) consists chiefly in your trying to bury him in cushions, which should not be of expensive material. Then, if you have on an old velveteen coat, you may after a quarter of an hour come out of the game (which is deliriously exciting) with only a black and blue arm, for

which you will be amply repaid by the sight of Mops erect, breathless, and in admired disorder, with his large eyes gleaming like coals of fire at you through their hairy curtain, simply dying to begin again.

It has been suggested that he is not what is vulgarly called a "sporting dog," and that is so. Though he has no idea of being all things to all men, like many an honest dog of our acquaintance, he can be anything he pleases (for his genius is rich and versatile) with the people he really loves. We often summon him to come partridge-shooting with us in the fields close round the house. If we find him not in the gun-room, we are used to give a low whistle. Instantly a responsive and piercing bark echoes through the back premises,—Mops' demand addressed to domestics in general to open some door in his way ; then another, and louder, on the first landing to announce his approach ; then the noise of a carpet being dragged swiftly down the front stairs,—and there is Mops. But when we carelessly pick up our breechloader (and this we always do in his presence) as though it were merely a stick, his excitement boils over, and his yells are but gradually allayed as we get outside the front door.

Among the turnips and potatoes he presents the strangest figure, his long hair draggled with the wet, and his pointed nose and broad head (for once visible in their natural shape) peering up every now and again to see how we are getting on. Though a little slow among cover which often hides him from sight, he will quarter his ground, work backwards and forwards at a wave of the hand, and set at his game in the most orthodox manner. Mops, we do verily believe, would scent a cockchafer ; and the only fault in his pointing (a thing beautiful to behold in its amateurish energy and self-consciousness) is that it almost as often indicates the presence of a thrush as of a partridge. As to passing by any living thing two inches high, he would

never dream of it. Then will he return, his little legs plastered with mud and shrunk to half their size, and his splendid hair hanging down like a Cretan goat's, exhausted but supremely happy, and retire to the pantry to be brushed. For Mops is strong, very strong; a dog of this size need be strong to carry about pounds of soil and quarts of water in his coat all day. The coat, by the way, conceals the bull neck of his species, and the long and solid trunk is supported by substantial quarters and fine stout forearms, so that the animal is by no means only ornamental.

As to his use,—well, let this sketch be finished with the story of Mops' only real adventure.

Two years ago his owner was acting as land-agent in a much disturbed district of Ireland, and lived in a large and ugly mansion where, to tell the honest truth, some one else ought to have been living. But as an agent our friend, Major D., did his duty and was detested by the peasantry. At an earlier stage they had "carded" one of his herds, drowned and strangled his calves, and even fired at one of his daughters (a lovely girl of sixteen) as she sat in loose array at her window one summer night. The bullet is in the window-frame to this day. Her father, who was annoyed, replied with a shot-gun and two heavy sawdust cartridges from a lower story, it is believed, to some effect. This however is by the way. Once a week, at the time referred to, Major D. used to drive into the neighbouring market-town, and on these occasions Mops (considerably to his relief) had never shown the slightest wish to accompany him further than the park-gate. One Wednesday, however,—it was a day or two after some ill-looking fellows had been seen hanging about the park,—Mops suddenly changed his mind. He was determined to go. This was embarrassing for the Major, who, apart from the trouble of looking after the dog, was afraid of risking so valuable an animal in a locality so distinguished

for what is called in Ireland "agrarian feeling." What was to be done?

Mops was locked up in an empty room which the children used for carpentering. His lamentable howls gradually subsided, and the rest of the household went about their business. Meanwhile Mops, as afterwards appeared, was doing a little carpentering on his own account. The door was a good sound door, but the floor beneath it was rather worn. It is a pity that no one could have seen his muscular little form as it lay there curled up on one side, the shaggy head savagely shaking as at each *scrunch* of his gnawing teeth fresh splinters of the deal board came away, and were swept aside by his little paws. It must have been hard work, harder than scraping at any rabbit-hole, but probably more delightful!

Nearly four hours had passed when an astonished domestic noticed and duly reported the alteration just executed by Mops. At that moment a small dark form might just have been discerned in the dusk of the evening scudding across the fields. This was Mops going to meet the Major,—and why in Heaven's name going at all?—and why going this way (the shortest cut as it happened) and not along the high road? Who shall peer into the workings of that strange little mind, or whatever we please to call it? It is certain that the point on the high road aimed at by Mops, consciously or unconsciously, was just about where an intelligent being would have expected the Major to be if he were walking home (as a rule he drove) at his usual hour, and it is equally certain that the Major was there. It does not appear moreover that Mops had the slightest doubt of this, or indeed exhibited the slightest hesitation as to what he meant to do, throughout the whole course of this, his one adventure. The Major was there, and nothing separated Mops from him but a high and rough stone wall, such stone walls as are peculiar to Ireland, where they have witnessed, and in their

mute way assisted, many ugly deeds. One of these in fact was in process when Mops arrived after a frantic struggle on the top of that wall.

Only twenty yards before reaching this point on the road the Major, who for reasons of his own had sent the carriage on and was walking home easily and circumspectly with a cigar in his mouth and a double-barrelled shot-gun under his arm, was suddenly confronted by a ragged and dirty masked ruffian who seemed to have dropped from the skies, but who soon proved his infernal origin by firing a heavy horse-pistol of antediluvian date right into the Major's face. As the heavy slugs whistled by the Major's ear, the dirty ruffian turned and fled down the deserted road into the gathering darkness.

Our friend, whose temper had been soured by the society of a disturbed neighbourhood, leant against the wall for a moment to steady himself and, allowing the proverbial forty yards' grace, deliberately let off two barrels into and about the stern of his retreating enemy. The man howled fearfully, but continued his course. The Major smiled, but the next moment cursed his folly with a mighty oath, and turned to grapple with a second opponent who, having waited his opportunity, sprang upon him while encumbered with his useless gun, and in the surprise bore him almost to the ground. What this second monster, who was also masked and unshaven, intended to do with the rude agricultural instrument, a sort of broken sickle, which he

produced at this moment, must be left to the imagination, for at this moment his attention was distracted.

With one of his curious little gurgling shrieks (like the bursting of a small musical instrument) the breathless Mops jumped, or fell rather, on all fours from the top of the wall. He did not spring at the man's calves, as dogs so often do; he had no time to think of that,—and in fact alighted a little higher up. The man wore moleskins, but what are moleskins to a little dog who makes a light afternoon meal of a bedroom door? Before any one of the three knew very clearly what had happened Mops had buried ten little teeth, each sharp as a new carving chisel, in the most fleshy part of the objectionable man's thigh. That was all, and that was quite enough. The Major, who has assisted (in the French sense) at many an Irish row, and seen a good deal of service in Egypt, confesses that he never heard a man swear as that ruffian did just before he was knocked down by the butt of the empty gun.

That night there was a good deal of coming and going of police. One of the individuals arrested will carry to the end of his life (which may be contemporaneous with the end of his imprisonment) such a "pretty pattern of No. 5" that the Major has more than once expressed a wish "to send it to the makers," which of course is out of the question. The other carried away as lively a recollection of Mops as we shall any of us have, but for a different reason.

## OUR FIRST-BORN.

SHE came, an angel in our sight,  
 We took her as a gift from Heaven ;  
 She gave our home a new delight,  
 Our hearts' best love to her was given.

We harvested her every look,  
 And watched the wonder in her eyes ;  
 What constant loving care we took,  
 How patiently we soothed her cries.

Her lineaments how closely conned ;  
 Each parent sought the other there,  
 Foretelling her brunette or blonde,  
 With golden, or with raven hair.

Her tiny hands, her tiny feet,  
 A sculptor's dream, despair and aim ;  
 Did even Nature form more sweet  
 In frail perfection ever frame ?

Her name, a lily name of love,  
 To match her loveliness of life ;  
 Or some dear name one, now above,  
 Has left with fragrant memories rife.

We watched her grow from day to day,  
 More sweetly than a flower in June,  
 More swiftly than a leaf in May  
 Unfolds itself to greet the noon.

The mandate of her outstretched hands,  
 When first she knew a loving face,  
 Was mightier than a Queen's commands,  
 And dearer than her proffered grace.

Her keen delight, her artful ways,  
 When the faint light began to dawn,—  
 Great pictures fade, but memory stays  
 O'er little scenes that love has drawn.

Then came at length the crowning bliss ;  
 How oft, the babe upon her knee,  
 'The mother sighed with yearning kiss,  
 "When will my darling speak to me !"

The first sweet sounds of broken speech,  
The first dear words that love inspires,  
How weak to these, the heart to reach,  
The music of a thousand lyres !

The eager questions, quaint replies,  
The awakening of the childish mind,  
The queries that perplex the wise,  
The griefs and joys that children find.

And so she grew still more and more,  
Our angel guest, our gift from Heaven,  
Our first-born child, for whom the store  
Of love waxed more, the more 'twas given.

Nor this alone ; but, like the cruise  
That fed of old the prophet guest,  
No danger now that we should lose  
The mated love of either breast.

Nay more,—by subtler creeds beguiled,  
We learnt with joy the simpler word,  
That he who tends a little child  
Is worshipping our blessed Lord.



## A ROMANCE OF CAIRO.

## I.

It is more than thirty years ago since Bevil Brereton arrived in Cairo and found there the fate or fortune of which this is the only complete or authentic history. The printed accounts are scrappy and misrepresent the main facts. I have collected, I think, all the newspaper paragraphs that appeared at the time on the subject. They are very meagre, and I believe an Alexandrian journal published in French was fined for mentioning the subject at all. The best account appeared in a Smyrna newspaper, but the next week's issue gave a contradiction of the story evidently "inspired." The whole business was hushed up by the authorities, and there are one or two incidents in it so romantic that I have found them received with incredulity when mentioned in conversation.

A visit to Egypt was, at the time of which I am writing, an uncommon thing, as it was a longer and costlier trip than it is now. Brereton was a man of leisure and money who had, or fancied he had, a weak lung. He had read *Eöthen*, and the *Crescent and the Cross*, and *Palm Leaves*, by Monckton Milnes, and he was drawn to take a passage on board a P. and O. steamer bound for Alexandria. He was the only passenger for Egypt; the other travellers were all booked for India.

He reached Cairo on a pleasant day in November, and was driven to Shepheard's Hotel. He had seen a dioramic picture of its verandah in Albert Smith's Eastern entertainment, and a caricature by Richard Doyle of the new-comer, or griffin, in the clutches of Arab dragomans and donkey-boys was the last thing he had seen in a London print-shop. He found both the picture

of the place and the illustration of manners perfectly accurate. He had an introduction to the Consul and to the resident doctor, and was fortunate in making a few congenial acquaintances.

The first was Keith Grey, an artist; the other two, Sir David and Lady Brabazon, were breaking their homeward journey from India by lingering a couple of months in Egypt. The four kept together, had places at table next to each other, and planned excursions in company. Lady Brabazon, a clever and sympathetic woman, obtained Brereton's confidence early in the day, and discovered that he was in love; in this she was right. She decided that the course of his love was not running smoothly, and that this accounted for his visit to Egypt; in this she was wrong. Really, the girl he loved loved him in return. The match was suitable, and there was a chance of pretty Vera Cathcart coming with her parents to Egypt if they could make a rendezvous with a certain uncle who held a legal appointment in the Straits Settlements, and who thought of wintering in Cairo. One other point about Brereton Lady Brabazon discovered—he had no relations. He was an only son of an only son. He had no real estate, but money invested in Government and other securities. He often called himself "a waif and a stray," and spoke of buying a property and settling on his return. These are all the circumstances that are necessary to be known in order to explain the subsequent action or inaction of the little group of persons who were associated with Brereton in these days at Cairo.

Cairo in the last days of Said Pasha, and in the early days of Ismail, was very different from the Cairo of to-day. The large Europeanised quarter

which bears the name of the first Khedive did not exist. There was no lion-guarded bridge over the Nile: the palaces at Gezireh and Gizeh were not built; and the long avenues of lebbek trees that are now the favourite afternoon drives of residents were unplanted. The Muski was an Eastern bazaar, covered with a roof of matting and full of shops piled with carpets, brass-work, many-socketed lamps, and tables inlaid with mother-of-pearl; now it is a vulgar street, disfigured by the hideous dummies of advertising tailors. The Ezbekieh was the most Europeanised quarter, but there was no enclosed garden, only an open space shaded by tufts of umbrageous trees. Napoleon's head-quarters were still standing, and there was no straight Boulevard Mohammed Ali, but a network of narrow streets with windows latticed with *mushrebiyehs* of intricate tracery occupying all the space between Ezbekieh and the citadel. The Shubra Road was the one drive, the Avenue de Boulogne of Cairo, and this stretched from the railway station to the disused palace of Mohammed Ali. It was then on Sundays and Fridays the universal resort, and it is now, though unfrequented and unfashionable, a place full of fascination. The lights that glint on the gnarled and twisted sycamore stems, the thick canopy of leaves overhead, the fields to the right with their yokes of buffaloes, groups of turbaned peasants and flocks of goats perplex the artist by the variety of subjects they offer to his pencil. For when he has selected one and begun the outline of a solemn sheikh under his palm-tree, a line of swinging camels passes across the scene and lies down to be unladen, and he finds he has begun half unconsciously to sketch the arching necks and heavy trappings which seem all you want for a foreground, until a cluster of women, balancing water-pitchers on erect heads and bearing luscious stems of sugarcane, occupy the place and give a new motive to the picture. Brereton daily frequented this road, and found plea-

sure in watching the figures that travelled along it. But his interest was not that of a painter. Grey sketched, and was always looking out for sketches, but Bevil sought to guess the characters of the men who reclined languidly in their carriages, and to discern what manner of women they were whose faces were half hidden by muslin veils and blinded carriage windows.

This at least was the state of his mind one evening as he looked with more curiosity than was quite well-bred into a carriage that drove slowly past him down the sycamore avenue. He had seen the carriage in the same place on six successive evenings. Every Sunday and Friday for three weeks it had passed him at the same slow pace close to the same spot. The carriage was well-appointed, with a coronet and a crescent on the panel; the black horses were carefully groomed, the *syces*, or running footmen, wore jackets ablaze with gold, and the coachman was trim in European livery and red fez. On a bay horse which kept pace with the brougham was a tall gaunt eunuch, who never seemed to keep his eyes off the carriage. Neither did Brereton. Directly it entered the avenue it seemed to possess a peculiar fascination for him. It is impossible to say what first attracted his attention. There were a dozen other carriages on the road just like this one, but for some mysterious reason this was the only one he ever saw. If it be urged that this interest was inconsistent, improper, even unjustifiable, seeing that he was in love with Vera Cathcart, I can only say that experience proves every day that men and women do inconsistent, improper, and even unjustifiable things. He was young and idle and disposed to gather his rosebuds from any bush that showed pretty flowers. The occupant of the brougham, a lady with large soft eyes and cream-white forehead and mysterious veil of gauze, had magnetic power, and drew him every week to the Shubra Road, and bade

him pause near the particular sycamore under the shade of which she regularly stopped. At last, as was natural, the eunuch noticed his persistency and seemed annoyed thereby. At all events the carriage did not stop on the fourth Friday at all.

Now there was at that time among the many mendicants of Cairo a certain dwarf called Idris. He was a favourite, for he had a roguish smile and a funny appealing look, and he never pestered passengers for *baksheesh* but took a shake of the head for a negative, thereby contrasting with the blind Copt, and the man with a fin instead of a hand, and the legless cripple who dragged himself along the pavement, and all the ghastly shapes that seemed to have been emptied out of Milton's lazar-house into the dusty road whenever and wherever the rich were gathered together. Brereton often gave a piastre to the dwarf and an acquaintance grew up between them. Perhaps the fact that Idris was also a pensioner of the mysterious lady secured the Englishman's interest in him. Every week the dwarf received an alms from the lady, who threw it from the carriage window just before she signalled the coachman to drive home. She usually stayed late, and on receiving her gift Idris made his salaams, and trotted off at a wonderful pace to his hut in the Fagalla. This programme had been punctually carried out for more than a month. No word had ever passed between the four actors in the odd drama, but they seemed obliged to go through the performance as if under a spell. They drove to the same place: they looked at each other for the same time with the same expression; but none of them save the dwarf who earned four piastres a week was the better for the performance.

## II.

THUS time passed until the end of January when Brereton received a letter from England. It announced that Miss Cathcart's father had heard that his brother, the Straits Settlements official, had resolved to stay in Cairo

for three months, and so they were all coming out. They asked Brereton to take rooms for them at Shephard's, and gave the date of their arrival. Some engagements, and a slight attack of fever, kept Bevil from going to the Shubra between the time of the arrival of the letter and the appearance of the Cathcarts. Vera had improved since he had seen her. She was just at the age when time seems busiest in enhancing a girl's attractions. The sea voyage and the frank enjoyment of new scenes and experiences had given vivacity to her eyes and a rose flush to her cheek—the outward signs of that sense of interest and happiness in life that glorifies beauty of colour and feature with that magical gift of the fairies we call by the name of Charm. Bevil and Vera had been neighbours in England and had enough home subjects in common to give them comparisons, allusions and reminiscences wherewithal to enhance the pleasure of foreign sight-seeing. When people can say often, "Is not that like so and so?" and "Does not that remind you of such and such a place?" they have links which make them enjoy each other's society. So it happened that for a short time the Eastern wife was forgotten, and the Western maid reigned in her stead. But Friday came, and the Rotten Row of Cairo had to be shown to the new-comers. With an odd feeling of uneasiness Bevil took his seat in the carriage with Vera and her mother. He pointed out the scenes and figures they passed: he was amusing on the gaudy dresses of the Levantine ladies, and the airs of the young natives who were just then beginning to coat themselves with French varnish; but he was looking all the time eagerly for the brougham. It was not there. They came to the sycamore he knew so well. There was neither carriage nor eunuch, but there was Idris the dwarf.

"What a quaint creature! He would do for the Hunchback in the *Arabian Nights*, or Nectabanus in *The Talisman*." Thirty years ago English ladies knew Scott.

The dwarf seeing the party were new-comers began his usual performance, a song and dance ending by balancing his staff on his chin. During these antics he managed to come close to Bevil and thrust a letter into his hand. This done he stopped quickly, and held his open palm for *baksheesh*. Directly he had received his piastres he disappeared, and as it was near sundown the party drove quickly homewards. Directly he was in his room Bevil locked the door and took out the note. It was in French and contained only these words: "You can save me from prison, and perhaps death, if you come to the garden of the Gem Palace to-morrow at ten o'clock."

The handwriting was disguised, and one word was misspelt, but Bevil never questioned the fact that it came from the veiled lady. He read it and re-read it, utterly puzzled and weaving a dozen theories and romances. A servant roused him by knocking at his door and telling him the gong had sounded ten minutes ago. He dressed and went to dinner with rather inconsistent explanations of his dilatoriness.

Once with Vera Cathcart, however, the message was forgotten. He had been growing more and more attached to her during the recent days, and she had never looked more beautiful than on that evening. Brereton was coming to himself. The fancy that mystery and romance had woven had been torn to pieces, and had vanished to the limbo of vanities. When he said "good-night" that evening he felt that he loved Vera as he had never loved before, and that he must ask her to be his wife the next day. In a mood compact of hope and distrust he strolled out on the terrace and flung himself on a long chair. The moonlight was raining a shower of silver radiance over everything. The terrace and the knotted sycamores which rose in groups in the open space that then stretched in front of the hotel to the Ezbekieh, the high

white houses in the distance, the minaret circled with a coronet of light in honour of some festival—all blended to form a picture of repose which lulled the lover into a reverie. He was roused by the voices of two men who had taken their seats at a table close by. They spoke French and had talked some time before he heard them at all. Then he only had a vague impression that their words jarred on the subject of his thoughts. After a time he disentangled them from his own fancies and found how they recalled that which he had been pleased to forget. When he began to attach a meaning to their speech he naturally looked round to see what manner of men they were.

They were moustached swarthy persons in Stambouli coats and fezes, men cut to the Egyptian official pattern and in no wise remarkable.

"I tell you," said one, "Effendina knows all. He is unwilling while the Delegate Ingleeze is here to make public scandal, but she has gone too far——"

"Which means," said the other, "that a certain friend of ours has set his heart on the Gem Palace. The scandals have been told by him and have lost nothing in the telling. The Pasha has determined that she shall drink a cup of coffee, and that he shall have three palaces instead of two. But let him take care; if she suspects him she will bring him down with her!"

"Impossible! What can she do? She is closely watched. The dwarf, Idris, whom she employs, is in the Pasha's pay——"

"And in everybody else's. I have known her for twenty years. She has never failed in any of her plans. There was Hassan Makmoud Pasha, who would not sell her the estate at Tanta. He died suddenly. There was the Greek Consul whose wife said she was looking old. He was recalled. There was Haig Agopian, the sharpest Armenian in Egypt. He refused to lend her the usual £5,000 on her diamonds after they had gone to Yusef Ben

Issachar the Jew to be reset. The bank had a run on it and was ruined in six months. All those who have thwarted her have been disgraced or have died. The last story is that she has declared it to be her ambition to have an Englishman at her feet."

"That would not be difficult I should think."

"Hush! speak lower."

The rest of the conversation was inaudible, but Bevil had heard enough to keep him from sleeping for some hours. He turned the matter over and over. Could the wicked princess be the veiled lady? The mention of the dwarf Idris seemed to favour the idea, but Idris was employed by many. Then the second clue came to his mind. The princess lived in the Gem Palace; so did the writer of the note he had received that evening. What could be the object of that summons? An obvious suggestion occurred to him. He wondered if a month ago he should have been fool enough to have followed up the adventure. The reply to the question was merged in other and pleasanter visions. What did he care for this Cairene Lucrezia Borgia and her plots? To-morrow he was to receive an answer which would decide his future from the sweetest lips in the world, and busy in imagining the smile that would accompany that answer, he fell asleep.

### III.

THE dream came true. The next day, in the orchard of palms hard by the hotel, he proposed and was accepted. The happiness of both seemed secure. In many ways, besides equality of age and fortune, the match seemed promising. Bevil and Vera were alike in tastes, and had many common interests. The isolation of Bevil's position had prevented him from being coloured and moulded by family life, and some softer traits were lacking. But marriage with a woman like Vera seemed likely to prevent the lovable side of his character from hardening.

The day was spent in making pleasant plans, and in those mutual questionings and discoveries of sympathy in the past which are new cords of attachment.

There was then little society in the modern sense in Cairo, and the engagement was not buzzed about and commented upon. Only two or three of the closer acquaintances of the Cathcarts were told of it and offered congratulations. In the afternoon the betrothed lovers drove out together and of course went to the Shubra Road. From the moment when he asked Vera to take a stroll in the palm orchard that morning Bevil had thought of nothing save his victorious love, but now the familiar avenue, the gnarled sycamores, the canopy of foliage, the alternating sun and shadow, and the groups of gay carriages (for it was Friday), brought back the other memory. They drove almost to the palace gate, then turned. A few yards from the usual spot he saw Idris. The dwarf evidently expected him to stop, and, he fancied, made a signal to him. The next moment he came up with the brougham and, perhaps by accident, perhaps at a sign to the native coachman, his own open victoria stopped. He looked instinctively into the window, and met the full gaze of the princess. She had the slightest film of muslin over her mouth and he saw her whole face. The eyes were blazing with passion, the nostrils distended, the teeth set, the great lips shut tight. As Bevil caught sight of the mask he instinctively put up his hand to shelter his Vera. The princess saw the protecting action. He scarcely knew whether it was fancy or fact, but he thought she made a counter gesture with her henna-tipped fingers as if drawing something from her bosom.

"What a strange face looked out of that carriage window," said Vera. "It reminded me of one of Le Brun's prints in the study at home."

"Our dwarf does not seem as



cheerful as usual to-night," said Bevil, shrinking from the subject.

"He looked keen enough as he passed us in the orchard of palms this morning," said Vera.

"Did he pass us there?" asked Bevil. "I did not see him."

"I thought you did not," said Vera archly.

#### IV.

THE next day there were unmistakable signs of something wrong at the hotel. The waiters were clustered in groups in the passage, not marshalled at their posts. The manager, usually oiled and curled, was standing on the terrace running his hands wildly through his hair. Two janissaries from the English Consulate were stationed at the door, and two more were standing sentry over a line of native servants who were drawn up in the garden. The guests were talking vociferously on the terrace and the words "suspected," "robbery," "immense value" were bandied about. In brief, a serious robbery had been committed and Lady Brabazon's jewels had been stolen. The topic occupied everybody for the day, and the wildest and most unlikely conjectures were hazarded as to the nationality of the thief and the method of his procedure. A little later the reports were absurdly contradictory. "This was the first robbery that had ever taken place at the hotel—" "There was a robbery regularly every season—" "Lady Brabazon's *parure* was worth £2,000—" "Lady Brabazon's *parure* was entirely paste."

The usual nine days passed, however, and the interest of all but the plundered lady and the hotel-keepers cooled. Cairo was soon to find a more absorbing topic of conversation.

One evening Vera had retired early, tired with a long ride to the Mokattam Hills, and Bevil was intending to sit on the terrace. To avoid a twentieth description of the robbery from Sir David whom he saw bearing down upon him, he strolled down the steps

into the open *place*. He had not gone far when he was accosted by a thin man in a black coat and red fez. Thinking he was one of the usual crowd of applicants for *baksheesh* Bevil hurried on, but hearing the man say something about the robbery and mention the name of Lady Brabazon he stopped.

"Does the *kha-wā-gah* *Ingleeze* [English gentleman] want to find all the things for the *sitt* [lady]? If he will come with me he can," said the man. "Look here"—and he showed a bracelet of sparkling diamonds.

There was no mistake about this action, and Bevil, thinking he might be on the scent, stopped under one of the oil lamps which were suspended from the branches of the trees few and far between. He now saw that the speaker was a negro and that he undoubtedly had some superb diamonds in his black fingers.

"Give me those," said the Englishman.

He laid them in Bevil's hand and beckoned him to come a little further, pointing to a small booth near a clump of trees where there were some other figures. Assured by the man's readiness to give him up the jewels he followed, but directly he stepped out of the ring of the lamplight he was struck down by a violent blow with a stick which laid him stunned on the ground. Two strong slaves caught him up, muffled his head in a shawl and carried him to a carriage which stood waiting. The man who had accosted him took the bracelet from his hand with a quiet laugh, and gave a few directions to the coachman and the slaves. Then he got into another carriage in which a dwarf was seated, and the two carriages drove away into the darkness.

#### V.

THE particulars of Brereton's seizure were obtained long afterwards from a pencil narrative written by himself. Neither his friends nor the authorities had anything to go upon. A waiter at the hotel saw him light a cigar and

go down the steps about ten o'clock. Nothing more was known. The open space before Shephard's was ill-lighted, and was not considered very safe after dark; but no disappearance like this had ever been recorded, and indeed robberies of Englishmen were not frequent. The police arrangements at Cairo were slovenly, but they had a certain vigour of procedure which detected crime when it was understood that the Government was in earnest. The English Foreign Office wrote despatches, and the Consul-General had interviews with the Pasha. The native authorities were pressed so hard that they were shaken out of their apathy, and spared neither threats, bribes, nor beatings, but nothing could be ascertained. From that February night Bevil Brereton vanished, and all record of him was obliterated.

I have read all the official correspondence which passed relating to "the remarkable disappearance of an Englishman," and examined files of newspapers to find all the printed information on the subject, but, as I said before, it is inaccurate and inconsistent. A draft of a will was found in his letter-case, leaving all his property to Vera Cathcart, but it was unsigned. His money, I believe, reverted to the Crown, failing kin. The names of Sir David Brabazon and Keith Grey are prominent in the correspondence about him. Some urgent business took the Cathcarts away from Egypt a month after the disappearance. I will not write that the wretchedness of Vera can be imagined, because grief like hers is precisely what cannot be imagined. She did not fall into a fever or suffer any injury to the brain, only the wearying disappointment—the daily hope, and the daily baffling of that hope—ate away her power of feeling happiness, and at last she learned the lesson so many have to learn from the stern schooling of trial (but few from a stroke so ghastly and sharp as hers) that "existence could be cherished, strengthened and fed without the aid of joy."

She did her daily duties, interested herself in the interests of those about her. Then at last, when her parents died, she joined a nursing sisterhood, and worked in a London hospital.

## VI.

It was the summer of 1883. Ismail had reigned and been deposed. Arabi's rebellion had been crushed, and England was occupying Egypt. She had a hard task to bring order into chaos, and now her reforms were thrown back by a violent epidemic of cholera. Since Bevil and Vera plighted their troth to each other, a new Cairo had arisen, and boulevards and wide streets had taken the place of the groves of palms and sycamores. But the huge houses were deserted. The long colonnades usually crowded with loungers dining, or smoking, or gambling, were empty. The *cafés* were tenantless, save where a solitary waiter cowered behind his bar expecting not customers, but grim Death. Fires were lighted in the streets, and rolled volumes of smoke over the town. The dirge-like chants of the native mourners hurrying their kinsfolk to the cemeteries were almost the only sounds audible.

The English had established a hospital for wounded soldiers shortly after the war, and a call had been made for experienced nurses. Vera had answered the call, and was now once more in Cairo. She could not account for the eagerness with which she read the summons to go out at once. Half an hour after seeing the appeal, she sent a telegram to offer herself as a candidate, and now a pale, grey-haired woman, as different from the joyous girl of thirty years ago as Constance is from Beatrice, she moved about the little hospital which was crowded with cholera patients, doing her duty accurately and sympathetically from long training, but with a feeling of the dreaminess of all the surroundings and an expectation of being drawn ever nearer and nearer to an end that com-

bined to make her begin every day with a sort of awe. But no weird imagination had fashioned, and no nightmare vision foreshown, any end so dreadful as that which came. Several English doctors had arrived in Cairo to study the epidemic, and to treat the patients. Their attention was called naturally to the general state of sanitary science or nescience in Egypt, and they had full powers to examine and report. Amongst these was a certain Dr. Markland, who belonged to the London hospital where Vera had nursed. He came to see her directly he arrived, and thinking she was looking over-worked, he told her to come at once for a drive with him. They hurried through the deserted streets, baking in the hot pestilence-laden air, and, hoping for a taste of purer and cooler breath, turned off towards Abbâsiyeh.

They got clear of the houses, and at last were fairly in the desert.

"Do you know what that red building is?" asked Markland.

"No," said Vera. "I have never been here before, but we can ask that gentleman. He is an army-chaplain, just come from burying some poor fellow in the desert."

They stopped the clergyman, and learned that the building was an Arab lunatic asylum.

"I should like to see it," said Markland. "We will try and get in."

They drove up to the gate which was shut but not barred. The porter refused admission at first, but gave way when he saw Markland meant to get in. Then it turned out that there were at that moment an English doctor and a high official compelling the place to disclose its secrets. They met Markland and the sister in the first corridor.

"Markland, thank God you have come! Sir Charles and I have just found something which seems too ghastly to be true. This place is hell."

And it was. In another moment they heard from above yells, shrieks,

and laughter, and pushing aside a few quaking warders went up stairs and entered the largest of the wards. There were lines of half-naked men sitting on their bedsteads, some chained, all filthy, diseased, and half-starved. The stench was loathsome, the air fetid. The doctor inquired through an Arab interpreter who had accompanied Sir Charles some particulars of the cases, but little was known. The patients had all been brought into the palace five years ago from an asylum at Bulak now disused. Up to that time the place had been called the Gem Palace, and had been occupied by a royal princess who was now dead. The interpreter spoke of her with a lowered voice and a look around as if he half expected she would punish him for mentioning her name. Sir Charles asked if they saw all the inmates.

"No; there was another room."

They crossed and found opposite the men's ward a similar room containing about forty women. Here again were chains, nakedness and dirt. Then came a court-yard where the less violent patients herded. A sheikh, repeating hundreds of times over one verse from the Koran, sat in the midst of his circle of wondering worshippers, while a hideous swollen-headed boy gibbered and mowed at him. A deformed man twisted and writhed along on the ground fancying himself a snake. A huge negro chained to a tree kept up all day a loud, monotonous roar. Again Sir Charles asked if he had seen all.

"Yes; all but the man below."

"Take us to him."

They went down to the basement story and passed through several large rooms. Many of them showed on the walls patches of gold and painting, and were furnished with divans covered with magenta satin once splendid but now mouldy and tattered. Some of the palace furniture had been left to rot in the mad-house. At last they reached a barred dungeon-cell. The key at first was not to be found, but after much delay the special warder, a one-eyed Soudanese, was hunted up and

forced to unlock the door. The room was very high, lighted by a grated aperture close to the ceiling. Through this streamed a struggling ray of the afterglow which was then suffusing the Red Mountain with a magic light. The ray fell on a man's face, very haggard and thin and nearly hidden by an overgrowth of white beard and moustache. His body was clothed in a ragged silk dressing-gown, and he lay on a native bedstead of palm twigs. A red leather cushion from one of the palace divans was placed under his head. There were staples and rings in the walls to which chains had been affixed, and the red marks of fetters showed on his wrists and ankles.

"It is a dead man," said Sir Charles. The doctors felt the pulse.

"No — not yet. Send for some wine."

"I have a flask with some brandy."

The sister had followed them in and approached the bed. She bent over it and put away the long white hair from the features of the prisoner.

"He looks like an Englishman," said Markland.

A cry bitter with the bitterness of the utmost suffering came from the

kneeling woman,—"Oh, my God! my God! Bevil! Bevil!"

He lived for a month tended by Vera with passionate care, but he never recovered consciousness nor ever recognised his faithful love. A pocket-book and diary containing a few entries were found in the room. From these I have put together the facts connected with his disappearance. There were a few lines describing an interview with the princess, from which her motive in having him seized could be gathered.

After this discovery the huge rambling Gem Palace was thoroughly searched, and abundant evidences of strange deeds done and ghastly sufferings endured were found in its secret cells and winding galleries. In a disused well choked with brambles and hidden by a hedge of prickly pear the workmen found the bones of a dwarf. Idris had probably been detected in playing false to his terrible mistress and had been summarily punished.

The last time I was in Egypt I found the grave of Bevil Brereton in the beautiful little English cemetery near the aqueduct of Salâheddîn in Old Cairo.

C. H. BUTCHER.

## LEAVES FROM A NOTE-BOOK.

## OF A DISCOURSE IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

NOTHING, said Montaigne, is so firmly believed as that which is least known. This whimsy appears to receive some confirmation from a passage in the speech delivered by Lord Coleridge on unveiling the bust of Matthew Arnold in Westminster Abbey. It is, I will hope, no proof of brutal insolence to ask whether that speech might not have been more apt to the occasion had it been something less controversial? When the friends and admirers of a distinguished man are assembled to do honour to his memory, it surely seems, to say the least of it, unnecessary to remind them how bitterly his claims to that honour have been disputed. And surely it was something more than unnecessary to heap such scorn on those who, while cordially admitting Arnold's claims on our grateful remembrance, have yet ventured to doubt whether he was equally admirable in all the many subjects on which he exercised his delicate and delightful talents. In that solemn spot, "that temple of silence and reconciliation, where the enmities of twenty generations lie buried," it should have been possible to praise the dead sufficiently without reviling the living. And after all what is their crime? Lord Coleridge very justly observed that it is as yet too soon to pronounce a final judgment on Arnold's work. It is much too soon. These matters are not determined by a man's contemporaries. So that what his lordship had to say on this head really amounted to no more than that he did not agree with those who differed from him, which might perhaps have been assumed.

In commenting on those criticisms passed on Arnold's work, both during his lifetime and since, which appeared

to him "altogether beside the mark,"—and beside the mark they must indeed be, if his lordship has hit it—Lord Coleridge named Jeffrey as the most signal instance of the incapacity of a bad critic to permanently injure the fame of a good writer. "Lord Jeffrey," he said, "did his best to crush Wordsworth; he injured for a time the sale of his poems, but he has not affected his fame in the slightest degree,—he has only manifested his own hopeless incompetence."

We have all heard this sort of thing many times before. Jeffrey has been the common butt of critics for the last thirty years. Except Mr. Saintsbury (in an article originally contributed to this magazine and republished in *Essays in English Literature*), I cannot think of any one who has ventured to say a good word for him; and I doubt whether even Mr. Saintsbury has persuaded more than a very few to look into the matter for themselves. "All his vivacity and accomplishments avail him nothing; of the true critic he had in an eminent degree no quality except one—curiosity. Curiosity he had, but he had no organ for truth; he cannot illuminate and rejoice us; no intelligent outpost of the new generation cares about him, cares to put him in safety; at this moment we are all passing over his body." Such was Arnold's own verdict, delivered more than a quarter of a century ago, and the world, it is to be feared, has gone on passing over the poor little body ever since till there is hardly a fragment of it left to remind them what once lay beneath their feet. "For a spirit of any delicacy and dignity," cried Arnold, "what a fate if he could



foresee it! To be an oracle for one generation, and then of little or no account for ever." Well, it is the common lot of critics, however dignified and delicate, and by a merciful dispensation one they do not as a rule foresee. Nor perhaps is there any good reason why Jeffrey should be exempted from it. Our criticism of our contemporaries cannot in reason have much interest for posterity. For the majority of a man's contemporaries posterity, he may be very sure, will care nothing, will not even care to know anything. In this respect Jeffrey was indeed fortunate above most men. He practised his business in an age distinguished for great names above all other ages in English literature save one. Yet it matters not to us how Byron and Scott, Wordsworth and Keats, Shelley and Coleridge looked to Jeffrey; the matter is how they look to us. And Jeffrey, it must be owned, is not interesting to study for his own sake. He has not the charm of an attractive personality or an attractive style. It has often been said that no writer will live, whatever his other qualities may be, who has not a style to keep him sweet; it is at least certain that no critic will live who has it not. Jeffrey was far indeed, as Mr. Saintsbury has shown, from being the narrow, purblind, rather ill-natured dullard that popular ignorance now pictures him; but I cannot think that any other feeling than curiosity is likely to be satisfied by disinterring his volumes from the dust and silence of the upper shelf.

Yet if we do not care to study him we might at least leave him alone. It is surely hard even on a man who has been in his grave for the best part of fifty years to assert that he has only proved his hopeless incompetence in something that we have not been at the pains to read. It would be natural enough to find Lord Coleridge's pet aversion, the irresponsible reviewer tricked out in a little brief authority, tripping in this way; but in a critic

and a man of letters of his lordship's acknowledged position, we do not expect to find it. Yet it looks much as though we had found it. No man has judged Wordsworth so truly and finely as Matthew Arnold, no man has sent so many intelligent and appreciative readers to him. Yet if Jeffrey is to be blamed for the hopeless incompetence of his estimate of Wordsworth's poetry, it is hard to see how Arnold is to go scot free. Any one who cares to learn what Jeffrey really wrote of Wordsworth, will be surprised to find on how many points he is at one with Arnold. The popular estimate of his critical capacities is based, I suspect, on the notion that his famous phrase, *This will never do*, was applied to Wordsworth's poetry indiscriminately. But the phrase was applied to *The Excursion* only, and only to certain parts of *The Excursion*. Has it not been justified? Much of *The Excursion*, too much of it, has never done and never will do. What does Matthew Arnold say of it? "Although Jeffrey completely failed to recognise Wordsworth's real greatness, he was yet not wrong in saying of *The Excursion* as a work of poetic style, 'This will never do.'" What does Mr. John Morley say of it—Mr. Morley to whose power of critical biography Lord Coleridge has paid a graceful compliment? "Besides being prolix Wordsworth is often cumbrous; has often no flight; is not liquid, is not musical. He is heavy and self-conscious with the burden of his message. . . . He is apt to wear a somewhat stiff-cut garment of solemnity, when not solemnity, but either sternness or sadness, which are so different things, would seem the fitter mood." And these defects, Mr. Morley adds, are specially oppressive in some parts of *The Excursion*. True, Mr. Morley warns the student that "not seldom in these blocks of afflicting prose suddenly we come upon some of the profoundest and most beautiful passages that the poet ever wrote." Jeffrey's warning is to the same effect, though conveyed in the more conventional language of

his school. "Besides these more extended passages of interest and beauty which we have quoted or omitted to quote, there are scattered up and down the book, and in the midst of its most repulsive portions a very great number of single lines and images that sparkle like gems in the desert, and startle us by an intimation of the great poetic powers that lie buried in the rubbish that has been heaped around them."

It is not easy to be certain how much if any, injury, Jeffrey's criticism did to the sale of Wordsworth's poems; but one may doubt if it could have been so much as the injury Wordsworth did them by his hopeless inability to distinguish between his good and bad work. On this inability Arnold has justly commented, as forming one of the chief obstacles to the poet's fame, and his own chief motive for publishing the excellent little volume of selections which has probably gained more readers for Wordsworth in the last dozen years than he was able to gain for himself during the whole of his long lifetime. "*The Excursion* and *The Prelude*, his poems of greatest bulk, are by no means Wordsworth's best work. His best work is in his shorter pieces, and many indeed are there of these which are of first-rate excellence. But in his seven volumes the pieces of high merit are mingled with a mass of pieces very inferior to them; so inferior to them that it seems wonderful how the same poet should have produced both. Shakespeare frequently has lines and passages in a strain quite false, and which are entirely unworthy of him. But one can imagine his smiling, if one could meet him in the Elysian Fields and tell him so; smiling and replying that he knew it perfectly well himself, and what did it matter? But with Wordsworth the case is quite different. Work altogether inferior, work quite uninspired, flat and dull, is produced by him with evident unconsciousness of its defects, and he presents it to us with the same faith and seriousness as his best work.

Now a drama or an epic fill the mind, and one does not look beyond them; but in a collection of short pieces the impression made by one piece requires to be continued and sustained by the piece following. In reading Wordsworth the impression made by one of his fine pieces is too often dulled and spoiled by a very inferior piece coming after it." When Arnold writes in this style of Wordsworth,—when he talks of the mass of inferior work, of poetical baggage "imbedding and clogging" the first-rate work, "obstructing our approach to it, chilling not infrequently the high-wrought mood with which we leave it,"—when he puts readers on their guard against that "scientific system of thought" which some of the poet's injudicious admirers have praised as his most precious quality, against the "tissue of elevated but abstract verbiage" posing as poetry, but really alien to its very nature—we do not say that the critic has done his best to crush the poet. Why should Jeffrey be charged with that intention when we find him writing to much the same effect, though in a coarser, a less discriminative vein?

For it must be owned that our fathers did not pick their terms so daintily as we have learned to do. When they found an offender they thought that they did well to be angry with him; or if they preferred to use ridicule to him, they used it often somewhat cumbrously. Those were rough days, when men were handier with the bludgeon than the rapier. But they were not always so far out in the objects of their censure as it is the fashion to assume. Lord Coleridge applies the term "brutal insolence" to the criticism of the *Quarterly Review* on Keats and on the early poems of Lord Tennyson. It doubtless contains much that is intolerable to our more delicate natures, and to what we are pleased to think our finer sense of justice. Yet who will say that there was not much to censure in both volumes? One may say indeed of the critic (who is now

known to have been Croker, and believed on the second occasion to have been much edited by Lockhart), what Johnson said of Dennis' strictures on *Cato*: "His dislike was not merely capricious. He found and shewed many faults; he shewed them indeed with anger, but he found them with acuteness." How finely Keats could criticise himself we know. Lord Tennyson can answer for himself. Perhaps Lord Coleridge has not read the article on the *Poems* of 1832 very lately. Should he care to refresh his memory, he may be surprised to find to what an extent the poet thought right to vindicate the critic. Many of the pieces disappeared altogether—though a few have indeed been partially restored in the latest edition under the head of *Juvenilia*. Most of those that were retained were subjected to an unsparing revision; *The Lotos Eaters* and *The Miller's Daughter*, for instance, are hardly recognisable in their first drafts as the poems which are as familiar to the present generation of Englishmen as *Marmion* and *The Giaour* were familiar to their fathers. For nearly fifty years the world has known Lord Tennyson for a great poet; but only those who have compared his genius in its immaturity with his genius in its prime can appreciate how great he could also be as a critic.

I do not of course mean to say that, apart from the manner in which it was conveyed, there is no difference between Arnold's estimate of Wordsworth and Jeffrey's estimate. Arnold praised Wordsworth far more cordially and unreservedly than Jeffrey did, and handled his faults far more tenderly. It was in Arnold's nature to do so, and in the nature of the method of criticism he advocated and practised. I only say that the difference between the two critics is not on this point so great as is commonly supposed. We should remember too that Wordsworth's poetry did not come with the shock of a surprise on Arnold as it came on Jeffrey. Arnold has rebuked

certain unwise disciples for their indiscriminate idolatry, which has retarded instead of advancing the master's fame. The poet, he says, must be recommended "not in the spirit of a clique, but in the spirit of disinterested lovers of poetry." Yet at the end of it all he is fain to confess himself a Wordsworthian with the best (or the worst) of them. "It is not for nothing," he says, "that one has been brought up in the veneration of a man so truly worthy of homage; that one has seen and heard him, lived in his neighbourhood and been familiar with his country. No Wordsworthian has a tenderer affection for this pure and sage master than I, or is less really offended by his defects." When censuring our fathers for their blindness we are apt to forget the inevitable difference between their point of view and ours. They were

Like some watcher of the skies  
When a new planet swims into his ken.

They could recognise that it was something out of their experience; but what it signified, or all it signified, they could not yet tell, as we can tell who have grown up in its light, examined it from every side, and learned its value from a generation of experts. Many worthy souls, for example, were much startled, and even shocked, by a judgment delivered not very long ago by the Lord Chief Justice of England on the behaviour of certain members of the Salvation Army at Whitchurch. Posterity, after having enjoyed all the benefits it will by that time have conferred on mankind, will recognise that judgment at its true value. But will they therefore thunder at the hopeless incompetence of their sires who, in the first shock of a revelation which swept away at a stroke all their old-fashioned notions of law, justice, and common-sense, were unable to realise the full sum of its meaning for suffering humanity? We may be sure that they will not.

It may be said that the older critics

were too prone to look suspiciously at new comers, too quick to condemn all that they did not at once understand, all that was contrary to established law and usage. Brought up in a school of strict tradition they were certainly not tolerant of change. Yet the most tolerant among them—among his own school, I mean, which of course did not include Hazlitt and Lamb—was surely this very man who is now resuscitated for our scorn. He was on many points, as Mr. Saintsbury has reminded us, a Romantic, though a Romantic doubtless with something of the timidity which Johnson confessed to have felt in his revolt against the tyranny of the Dramatic Unities. Almost alone among his school he dared to stand up for Keats; he anticipated, and something more than anticipated, Arnold himself in distinguishing Dryden and Pope as classics not of our poetry but of “the age of prose and reason,” and hailed with joy the herald of the emancipation in Cowper. Jeffrey, in short, proved, as critics of every age, most assuredly not excluding our own, have proved the truth of Arnold’s words, “No man can trust himself to speak of his own time, and of his own contemporaries with the same sureness of judgment and the same proportion as of times and men gone by.” But our fathers’ errors are not ours. They were too prone to distrust what they could not at once understand; we welcome it with rapture. They were too apt to mistake originality for eccentricity; we mistake eccentricity for originality. They kept their eyes a little too closely fixed on law and custom; we hail the violation of all custom and all law as the essential note of genius. On which side lies the greater error our posterity shall determine. It was not the least of Matthew Arnold’s claims to acceptance as a critic that he for the most part kept such an even course between the two extremes. Goethe said that no criticism was worth much that was not influenced by a certain one-sided enthusiasm. Perhaps; but perhaps

also one had need to be a Goethe to go safely by that rule.

Like all wholesome natures Matthew Arnold did not affect to be indifferent to praise, nor perhaps even to a reasonable amount of flattery from quarters where flattery is always privileged and pleasant. But against the indiscriminate homage of a clique his sense of the ridiculous and his sense of proportion equally warned him. He warned others against it in the case of writers whom he greatly and sincerely admired, Milton, Goethe, Byron, Wordsworth; he would assuredly not have seen it applied to himself with complacency. To hear himself credited with all the best qualities of men so highly and variously gifted as Horace and Cardinal Newman, Thackeray and Dr. Lightfoot, Professor Jowett and Mr. Morley, could never have been to his taste. But there was one phrase applied to him by Lord Coleridge which he would not have repudiated,—a striver after Truth, though he would have preferred to be called a seeker. It was his own phrase. “To try and approach Truth on one side after another, not to strive or cry, not to persist in pressing forward on any one side, with violence and self-will,”—thus, and only thus, was such measure of Truth as is ever vouchsafed to mortals, in his opinion to be won. This was the praise he gave to his friend Clough; it was the praise he claimed for himself:

A fugitive and gracious light he seeks,  
Shy to illumine; and I seek it too.

This does not come with houses or  
with gold,  
With place, with honour, and a flattering  
crew;  
’Tis not in the world’s market bought  
and sold—

But the smooth-slipping weeks  
Drop by, and leave its seeker still un-  
tired;  
Out of the heed of mortals he is gone,  
He wends unfollowed, he must house  
alone;  
Yet on he fares, by his own heart in-  
spired.

“We are all seekers still!” he cried.

But he was careful to add : " Seekers often make mistakes."

#### OF A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION.

Emerson was one of the kindest and best-tempered of men, but his forbearance is said to have been once sorely tried by finding a letter he had written privately and in all friendship to Thoreau used as an advertisement for one of that philosopher's books. Emerson had little taste for the peculiar affectations which Thoreau chose to dignify by the name of philosophy ; but he had a generous sympathy for all forms of suffering humanity, and it was this sympathy doubtless rather than his judgment that had inspired his commendations of Thoreau's new work. For a man of delicacy and dignity the situation must indeed have been embarrassing.

One cannot but wonder whether Mr. Gladstone does not sometimes find himself in a similar situation, and is not equally embarrassed. He writes, as is well known, many letters, and it is hardly credible that all one reads under his hand was intended for publication. The other day, for instance, an extract was printed in a newspaper from a letter written by him to the author of a novel : " I congratulate you," it ran, " on *The Scapegoat* as a work of art, and especially upon the noble and spiritually drawn character of Israel."

The author of *The Scapegoat* is Mr. Hall Caine. The book, he says, is " less novel than romance, and less romance than poem." These distinctions are never so easy for a reader to draw as for an author, who must needs know what he would be at better than any one else. Speaking plainly, the book is in two volumes and in prose, was first published, with pictures, in one of our illustrated papers, and deals with the condition of the Jews in Morocco. Mr. Caine has also written *The Bondman* (which is neither novel, romance, nor poem, but a saga), and *The Deemster* (which does not appear to have

been so accurately defined). Both these books have been much praised, and one at least much read. Of *The Deemster* I cannot find any particular records ; but of *The Bondman* (which is now in its fourth edition) the praise appears to have been unanimous. A fly-leaf in *The Scapegoat* is devoted to its predecessor's glory. One critic finds its leading characters of " colossal grandeur " ; another opines its argument to be " grand " and its power " almost marvellous " ; a third (with some faint memory perhaps of Mr. Wopsle's famous interpretation of the character of Hamlet) sees " a touch of almost Homeric power in its massive and grand simplicity " ; while a fourth, outsoaring all his fellows, boldly proclaims it to be " distinctly ahead of all the fictional literature of our time, and fit to rank with the most powerful fictional writing of the past century." It is not for me to say that this praise is excessive, who have never read *The Bondman* and only a few chapters of *The Deemster*. But with *The Scapegoat* I have been more fortunate.

General terms of praise, as of blame, cannot easily be gainsaid. A man may say he likes a book, or dislikes it, and there is an end of it. But Mr. Gladstone has selected certain particular qualities of *The Scapegoat* for his commendation ; he praises it as a work of art, and for the noble and spiritually drawn character of its hero. It is for this that, after reading the book, I could not but wonder whether Mr. Gladstone had picked his words quite so carefully as he would have done had he anticipated the use to which they would be put.

For in sober truth, sweet, tender, spiritual, imaginative, dramatic as *The Scapegoat* may be (these epithets are culled from the effusions of another and anonymous critic), its greatness as a work of art is not clearly manifest to me. Novel, romance, or poem, whatever it is to be called, it will be read and regarded by the general public as a story, a narrative of cer-



tain events which came, or may be supposed to have come, under the narrator's knowledge and in which he played a certain part. From this point of view its construction appears to me to be somewhat defective, I would even say clumsy, might I venture to put such an epithet in juxtaposition with so many flattering ones. It opens with an introduction wherein the story-teller, sojourning in Tetuan at the time of the chief Mahomedan festival, witnesses the entry of the Sultan into that city. Among the ladies of his Majesty's harem is one, not riding on a mule as the others ride, but carried in a litter swung between two white Arabian horses. An opportune stumble of one of the horses enables the curious watcher to catch a glimpse of the face of the lady thus honoured, and it was the face, as he thought, of a beautiful English girl. He is interested—if one dared to use so vulgar a phrase, one would say he had fallen in love at first sight; he makes enquiries, discovers that the girl is not English but a Moorish Jewess, and had just been presented by the governor of the town to his lord the Sultan. He is determined to release her, and he does release her; moreover he marries her, takes her to his home in England, and (let us all hope), lives happily with her ever after. But before this sweet consummation can be effected, her previous story and the story of her father have to be told. This is done in the form of an independent narrative. The reader is thus carried backwards and forwards, and forwards and backwards, from one stage of time to another, and from one mode of narrative to another, till he needs some effort of memory to recall at any given moment exactly where he is and to whom he is listening. And this complication makes a sentence in the preface especially puzzling. Mr. Caine apologises for the romantic or poetic character of his novel by the preoccupation of his heart with "the spiritual love of a noble man and a beautiful woman." Who is the noble

man? If Israel, is the beautiful woman his wife Ruth or his daughter Naomi? If the former, the occupation of Mr. Caine's heart must soon have gone, for Ruth is dead at an early stage of the proceedings. If the latter, the love of a father for his daughter should be spiritual no doubt, even in Morocco, yet even in Morocco surely not so uncommon or distracting a circumstance as to absorb all an author's interest in his work. If the noble man be the narrator himself, surely it is somewhat inartistic to keep the chief inspiration of a story out of sight during the greater part of its progress. Possibly I am wrong—and I recognise fully how much easier it is to dogmatise about fiction than to write it; but, considered as a work of art, a work requiring a regular construction and evolution, this method of story-telling appears not entirely satisfactory.

Again, has Mr. Caine altogether succeeded in the design of his book? That design appears to be—among other things, of course, for no man whatever the grandeur of his conception and the integrity of his aim, can afford wholly to despise the sweet influences of the commercial spirit—to alleviate the condition of the Jews in Morocco, and generally to stir up the Christian Powers to see to it that that land shall no longer be "a reproach to Europe, a disgrace to the century, an outrage on humanity, a blight on religion!" There is no disputing the fact that in Mr. Caine's Morocco the Jews are considerably harassed by their Moslem masters, and it is at least conceivable that they do not fare very much better in the Morocco of Sultan Muley Hassan. But surely he had done better to be more careful to enlist our sympathies with the objects of his compassion. Except for the girl Naomi and her mother Ruth, there seems uncommonly little to choose between Jew and Mahomedan. The rich Mahomedans harry the Jews, and the Jews harry the poor Mahomedans,—and each other. It is not impossi-

ble that this is so in reality ; but the question is not one of reality, not of that truth to plain fact after which Mr. Caine seems to have toiled, but of art. If Abraham Pigman (a curious name for a Jew !), Judah ben Lolo, and Reuben Malaki are typical representatives of the objects of Moorish tyranny, then for my poor part I am inclined to think that Pigman, Lolo, and Malaki met with something very like their deserts. And what of the hero, the Scapegoat himself, Israel ben Oriel, the noble and spiritually drawn Israel? Throughout the greater part of the book he is the biggest rogue of them all. For twenty years of his life he is the chief and the willing instrument of the Cadi in tormenting and plundering the people of his blood and faith, and this he does in revenge for being robbed of his inheritance through the intrigues of his own family. True he repents at the eleventh hour, hoping thereby to win the mercy of Heaven for his daughter Naomi who has been deaf, dumb, and blind from her birth. He wins it, but at a terrible price. He loses the favour of his former employers without gaining the favour of his former victims, for Pigman and his kind, who hated their oppressor in the day of his prosperity, are not likely to spare him in the perilous time. Old, poor, persecuted, reviled, his wife dead, his child torn from him, Israel makes no doubt a pitiful figure. Yet in our pity we cannot forget that after all the measure meted out to him is but that he has measured to others. Nor is he truly a scapegoat ; he suffers not for the sins of others but for his own. Now in all this Mr. Caine has, I would submit, committed an artistic blunder. That these are the very Jews of Morocco I do not dispute. I know nothing of them, whereas Mr. Caine claims to have seen and studied them in their own place. But are these the Jews for whom it is safe to ask, to insist upon our sympathy, for the author's method is one rather of insistence than entreaty? Is Pigman, is even

Israel himself, a figure likely to stir the Christian heart of Europe to a holy crusade against the iniquities of Moorish rule? Mr. Caine has been placed by one of his critics on a level with Walter Scott at his best. Well, Scott once tried his hand at enlisting our sympathy for a Jew and his daughter, being moved thereto, as Lockhart tells us, by the account given to him by his friend Skene of the austerities with which the race was still even in his time treated in Germany. Scott knew nothing but what his friend told him, and what his medieval reading had furnished him with. Yet who has succeeded best, Mr. Caine with Israel and Naomi, or Sir Walter Scott with Isaac and Rebecca?

A word as to the style of this book, which has been so highly praised. As a reporter of the fact Mr. Caine has undoubtedly conspicuous merits. He can describe a scene vividly ; he has, as they say of painters, an eye for colour ; his picture of the Sultan's entry into Tetuan is a very spirited and graphic piece of work, and there are many other pictures throughout the two volumes entitled to the same praise. But he is too fond, in a metaphorical sense, of using italics and capitals ; he writes always at a white heat ; he does not sufficiently distinguish between what is essential and what is only accidental. The eye for colour and fact, the power of description and narrative, avail nothing without the sense of proportion, without the faculty of selecting, shaping, controlling. With Mr. Caine every molehill is a mountain and every shrub a forest tree. It is the same with his language. He has a rich and picturesque vocabulary, but he is too lavish in its use, too fond of what Johnson has happily called the Terrific Diction. "There are men," said the sage, "who seem to think nothing so much the characteristic of a genius as to do common things in an uncommon manner ; like Hudibras, *to tell the clock by algebra* ; or like the lady in Dr. Young's satires, *to drink tea by stratagem*." Perhaps

an even better illustration of Mr. Caine's manner might be found in a famous criticism made not *by* but *on* Johnson; Mr. Caine is too apt to make his sprats talk like whales. "Strange things" are for ever about to happen, and when they have happened they are not found to be so very strange. Nothing is more irritating to a reader than this habit, or more likely to render him blind to an author's real powers. Nothing can be farther removed from the "massive and grand simplicity" of the Homeric manner. Matthew Arnold has described the style of one of Shelley's biographers as too much suffused with sentiment and poetic fervour for a prose writer, and himself to have been at times so much agitated by it as to be obliged to take refuge in a drier world. One feels, I think, something of the same agitation when borne along on the full torrent of Mr. Caine's eloquence. I remember, when reading passages of *The Scapegoat* from the illustrated paper in which it was originally published, to have experienced much relief in turning occasionally to the drier world provided by the other entertainments to be found in such journals, portraits of distinguished athletes, professors, and politicians, fashion-plates, chess-problems, and so forth.

And this lack of proportion leads Mr. Caine into another error. He tells us, and we can clearly see, that he has been at much labour to acquire the correct "local atmosphere" of his story, by acquainting himself, under skilled guidance, with the homes and lives of the Jews of Morocco and by studying their ceremonial law. Such labour is highly meritorious, and when the knowledge thus won is discreetly

used it undoubtedly adds much to the sense of reality. Yet this also can prove a stone of stumbling, and such it has too often proved to Mr. Caine. When we read, as we read on almost every page, of *jellabs* and *ginbri*, of *káks* and *zummetta*, of soldiers gorgeous in *shasheah* and *selham*, of the balls of Charoseth, the three Mitzvoth, and the day of the night of the Seder, we feel that the local atmosphere is growing oppressive rather than luminous; we are reminded of that wise ancient who objected to the use of strange words which stop a reader as a reef stops a ship, or, if in a flippant mood, perhaps our memory strays to the Eastern Serenade of Bon Gaultier. Mr. Caine too often forgets that he is writing not for the Jews of Morocco but for the Christians of England.

Industry, seriousness, earnestness of purpose and integrity of aim are good things, and less common perhaps than they should be; belief in one's self, when not pushed too far, is no bad thing. All these qualities may be cordially granted to Mr. Hall Caine. But they are not sufficient to make an artist, though they may be a necessary complement to him. It is not possible, I think, to call *The Scapegoat* a work of art, if one attaches any serious meaning to the phrase. It is hard perhaps to blame even a real artist in these times for condescending to supplement his native art with the arts of advertisement. But he will at least be expected to use them artistically, with a due sense of fitness and proportion, and above all things to remember the eternal truth of the saying that the reputation of a book is determined not by what is written about it but by what is written in it.

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# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

JANUARY, 1892.

## DON ORSINO.<sup>1</sup>

BY F. MARION CRAWFORD.

### CHAPTER I.

DON ORSINO SARACINESCA is of the younger age and lives in the younger Rome, with his father and mother, under the roof of the vast old palace which has sheltered so many hundreds of Saracinescas in peace and war, but which has rarely in the course of the centuries been the home of three generations at once during one-and-twenty years.

The lover of romance may lie in the sun, caring not for the time of day and content to watch the butterflies that cross his blue sky on the way from one flower to another. But the historian is an entomologist who must be stirring. He must catch the moths, which are his facts, in the net which is his memory, and he must fasten them upon his paper with sharp pins, which are dates.

By far the greater number of old Prince Saracinesca's contemporaries are dead, and more or less justly forgotten. Old Valdarno died long ago in his bed, surrounded by sons and daughters. The famous dandy of other days, the Duke of Astrardente, died at his young wife's feet some three-and-twenty years before this chapter of family history opens. Then the primal Prince Montevarchi came to a violent end at the hands of his librarian, leaving his English princess consolable but unconsolated, leaving also his daughter Flavia married to that other

Giovanni Saracinesca who still bears the name of Marchese di San Giacinto; while the younger girl, the fair, brown-eyed Faustina, loved a poor Frenchman, half soldier and all artist. The weak, good-natured Ascanio Bellegra reigns in his father's stead, the timidly extravagant master of all that wealth which the miser's lean and crooked fingers had consigned to a safe keeping. Frangipani too, whose son was to have married Faustina, is gone these many years, and others of the older and graver sort have learned the great secret from the lips of death.

But there have been other and greater deaths, beside which the mortality of a whole society of noblemen sinks into insignificance. An empire is dead and another has arisen in the din of a vast war, begotten in bloodshed, brought forth in strife, baptised with fire. The France we knew is gone, and the French Republic writes *Liberty, Fraternity, Equality*, in great red letters above the gate of its habitation, which within is yet hung with mourning. Out of the nest of kings and princes and princelings, and of all manner of rulers great and small, rises the solitary eagle of the new German Empire and hangs on black wings between sky and earth, not striking again, but always ready, a vision of armed peace, a terror, a problem—perhaps a warning.

Old Rome is dead, too, never to be old Rome again. The last breath has

<sup>1</sup> Copyright 1891, by Macmillan and Co.

been breathed, the aged eyes are closed for ever, corruption has done its work, and the grand skeleton lies bleaching upon seven hills, half covered with the piecemeal stucco of a modern architectural body. The result is satisfactory to those who have brought it about, if not to the rest of the world. The sepulchre of old Rome is the new capital of united Italy.

The three chief actors are dead also—the man of heart, the man of action, and the man of wit, the good, the brave, and the cunning, the Pope, the King, and the Cardinal—Pius IX., Victor Emmanuel II., Giacomo Antonelli. Rome saw them all dead.

In a poor chamber of the Vatican, upon a simple bed, beside which burned two waxen torches in the cold morning light, lay the body of the man whom none had loved and many had feared, clothed in the violet robe of the cardinal-deacon. The keen face was drawn up on one side with a strange look of mingled pity and contempt. The delicate, thin hands were clasped together on the breast. The chilly light fell upon the dead features, the silken robe and the stone floor. A single servant in a shabby livery stood in a corner, smiling foolishly, while the tears stood in his eyes and wet his unshaven cheeks. Perhaps he cared, as servants will when no one else cares. The door opened almost directly upon a staircase and the noise of the feet of those passing up and down upon the stone steps disturbed the silence in the chamber of death. At night the poor body was thrust unhonoured into a common coach and driven out to its resting-place.

In a vast hall, upon an enormous catafalque, full thirty feet above the floor, lay all that was left of the honest king. Thousands of wax candles cast their light up to the dark, shapeless face, and upon the military accoutrements of the uniform in which the huge body was clothed. A great crowd pressed to the railing to gaze their fill and go away. Behind the barrier tall troopers in cuirasses mounted guard

and moved carelessly about. It was all tawdry, but tawdry on a magnificent scale—all unlike the man in whose honour it was done. For he had been simple and brave. When he was at last borne to his tomb in the Pantheon, a file of imperial and royal princes marched shoulder to shoulder down the street before him, and the black charger he had loved was led after him.

In a dim chapel of St. Peter's lay the Pope, robed in white, the jewelled tiara upon his head, his white face calm and peaceful. Six torches burned beside him; six nobles of the guard stood like statues with drawn swords, three on his right hand and three on his left. That was all. The crowd passed in single file before the great closed gates of the Julian Chapel. At night he was borne reverently by loving hands to the deep crypt below. But at another time, at night also, the dead man was taken up and driven towards the gate to be buried without the walls. Then a great crowd assembled in the darkness and fell upon the little band and stoned the coffin of him who never harmed any man, and screamed out curses and blasphemies till all the city was astir with riot. That was the last funeral hymn.

Old Rome is gone. The narrow streets are broad thoroughfares, the Jews' quarter is a flat and dusty building lot, the fountain of Ponte Sisto is swept away, one by one the mighty pines of Villa Ludovisi have fallen under axe and saw, and a cheap, thinly-inhabited quarter is built upon the site of the enchanted garden. The network of by-ways from the Jesuits' church to the Sant' Angelo bridge is ploughed up and opened by the huge Corso Vittorio Emanuele. Buildings which strangers used to search for in the shade, guide-book and map in hand, are suddenly brought into the blaze of light that fills broad streets and sweeps across great squares. The vast Cancelleria stands out nobly to the sun, the curved front of the Massimo palace

exposes its black colonnade to sight upon the greatest thoroughfare of the new city, the ancient Arco de' Cenci exhibits its squalor in unshadowed sunshine, the Portico of Octavia once more looks upon the river.

He who was born and bred in the Rome of twenty years ago comes back after long absence to wander as a stranger in streets he never knew, among houses unfamiliar to him, amidst a population whose speech sounds strange in his ears. He roams the city from the Lateran to the Tiber, from the Tiber to the Vatican, finding himself now and then before some building once familiar in another aspect, losing himself perpetually in unprofitable wastes made more monotonous than the sandy desert by the modern builder's art. Where once he lingered in old days to glance at the river, or to dream of days yet older and long gone, scarce conscious of the beggar at his elbow, and hardly seeing the half-dozen workmen who laboured at their trades almost in the middle of the public way—where all was once aged and silent and melancholy and full of the elder memories—there, at that very corner, he is hustled and jostled by an eager crowd, thrust to the wall by huge, grinding, creaking carts, threatened with the modern death by the wheel of the modern omnibus, deafened by the yells of the modern newsvendors, robbed, very likely, by the light fingers of the modern inhabitant.

And yet he feels that Rome must be Rome still. He stands aloof and gazes at the sight as upon a play in which Rome herself is the great heroine and actress. He knows the woman and he sees the artist for the first time, not recognising her. She is a dark-eyed, black-haired, thoughtful woman when not upon the stage. How should he know her in the strange disguise, her head decked with Gretchen's fair tresses, her olive cheek daubed with pink and white paint, her stately form clothed in garments that would be gay and girlish but which are only unbecom-

ing? He would gladly go out and wait by the stage-door until the performance is over, to see the real woman pass him in the dim light of the street-lamps as she enters her carriage and becomes herself again. And so, in the reality, he turns his back upon the crowd and strolls away, not caring whither he goes until, by a mere accident, he finds himself upon the height of Sant' Onofrio, or standing before the great fountains of the Acqua Paola, or perhaps upon the drive which leads through the old Villa Corsini along the crest of the Janiculum. Then, indeed, the scene thus changes, the actress is gone and the woman is before him; the capital of modern Italy sinks like a vision into the earth out of which it was called up, and the capital of the world rises once more, unchanged, unchanging and unchangeable, before the wanderer's eyes. The greater monuments of greater times are there still, majestic and unmoved, the larger signs of a larger age stand out clear and sharp; the tomb of Hadrian frowns on the yellow stream, the heavy hemisphere of the Pantheon turns its single opening to the sky, the enormous dome of the world's cathedral looks silently down upon the sepulchre of the world's masters.

Then the sun sets and the wanderer goes down again through the chilly evening air to the city below, to find it less modern than he had thought. He has found what he sought and he knows that the real will outlast the false, that the stone will outlive the stucco, and that the builder of to-day is but a builder of card-houses beside the architects who made Rome.

So his heart softens a little, or at least grows less resentful, for he has realised how small the change really is as compared with the first effect produced. The great house has fallen into new hands and the latest tenant is furnishing the dwelling to his taste. That is all. He will not tear down the walls, for his hands are too feeble to build them again, even if he were not occupied with other matters and



hampered by the disagreeable consciousness of the extravagances he has already committed.

Other things have been accomplished, some of which may perhaps endure, and some of which are good in themselves, while some are indifferent and some distinctly bad. The great experiment of Italian unity is in process of trial and the world is already forming its opinion upon the results. Society, heedless as it necessarily is of contemporary history, could *not* remain indifferent to the transformation of its accustomed surroundings ; and here, before entering upon an account of individual doings, the chronicler may be allowed to say a few words upon a matter little understood by foreigners, even when they have spent several seasons in Rome and have made acquaintance with each other for the purpose of criticising the Romans.

Immediately after the taking of the city, in 1870, three distinct parties declared themselves, to wit, the Clericals or Blacks, the Monarchists or Whites, and the Republicans or Reds. All three had doubtless existed for a considerable time, but the wine of revolution favoured the expression of the truth, and society awoke one morning to find itself divided into camps holding very different opinions.

At first the mass of the greater nobles stood together for the lost temporal power of the Pope, while a great number of the less important families followed two or three great houses in siding with the Royalists. The Republican idea, as was natural, found but few sympathisers in the highest class, and these were, I believe, in all cases young men whose fathers were Blacks or Whites, and most of whom have since thought fit to modify their opinions in one direction or the other. Nevertheless the Red interest was, and still is, tolerably strong and has been destined to play that powerful part in parliamentary life which generally falls to the lot of a compact third party, where a fourth does not yet

exist, or has no political influence, as is the case in Rome.

For there is a fourth body in Rome, which has little political but much social importance. It was not possible that people who had grown up together in the intimacy of a close caste-life, calling each other "thee" and "thou" and forming the hereditary elements of a still feudal organisation, should suddenly break off all acquaintance and be strangers one to another. The brother, a born and convinced clerical, found that his own sister had followed her husband to the court of the new King. The rigid adherent of the old order met his own son in the street, arrayed in the garb of an Italian officer. The two friends who had stood side by side in good and evil case for a score of years saw themselves suddenly divided by the gulf which lies between a Roman cardinal and a Senator of the Italian Kingdom. The breach was sudden and great, but it was bridged for many by the invention of a fourth proportion. The points of contact between White and Black became Grey, and a social power, politically neutral and constitutionally indifferent, arose as a mediator between the Contents and the Malcontents. There were families that had never loved the old order but which distinctly disliked the new, and who opened their doors to the adherents of both. There is a house which has become Grey out of a sort of superstition inspired by the unfortunate circumstances which oddly coincided with each movement of its members to join the new order. There is another, and one of the greatest, in which a very high hereditary dignity in the one party, still exercised by force of circumstances, effectually forbids the expression of a sincere sympathy with the opposed power. Another there is, whose members are cousins of the one sovereign and personal friends of the other.

A further means of amalgamation has been found in the existence of the

double embassies of the great powers—Austria, France and Spain each send an Ambassador to the King of Italy and an Ambassador to the Pope, of like state and importance. Even Protestant Prussia maintains a Minister Plenipotentiary to the Holy See. Russia has her diplomatic agent to the Vatican, and several of the smaller powers keep up two distinct legations. It is naturally neither possible nor intended that these diplomatists should never meet on friendly terms, though they are strictly interdicted from issuing official invitations to each other. Their point of contact is another grey square on the chess-board.

The foreigner, too, is generally a neutral individual, for if his political convictions lean towards the wrong side of the Tiber his social tastes incline to Court balls; or if he is an admirer of Italian institutions, his curiosity may yet lead him to seek a presentation at the Vatican, and his inexplicable though recent love of feudal princedom may take him, card-case in hand, to that great stronghold of Vaticanism which lies due west of the Piazza di Venezia and due north of the Capitol.

During the early years which followed the change, the attitude of society in Rome was that of protest and indignation on the one hand, of enthusiasm and rather brutally expressed triumph on the other. The line was very clearly drawn, for the adherence was of the nature of personal loyalty on both sides. Eight years and a half later the personal feeling disappeared with the almost simultaneous death of Pius IX. and Victor Emmanuel II. From that time the great strife degenerated by degrees into a difference of opinion. It may perhaps be said also that both parties became aware of their common enemy, the social democrat, soon after the disappearance of the popular King whose great individual influence was of more value to the cause of a united monarchy than all the political clubs and organisations in Italy put

together. He was a strong man. He only once, I think, yielded to the pressure of a popular excitement, namely, in the matter of seizing Rome when the French troops were withdrawn, thereby violating a ratified Treaty. But his position was a hard one. He regretted the apparent necessity, and to the day of his death he never would sleep under the roof of Pius IX.'s palace on the Quirinal, but had his private apartments in an adjoining building. He was brave and generous. Such faults as he had were no burden to the nation and concerned himself alone. The same praise may be worthily bestowed upon his successor, but the personal influence is no longer the same, any more than that of Leo XIII. can be compared with that of Pius IX., though all the world is aware of the present Pope's intellectual superiority and lofty moral principle.

Let us try to be just. The unification of Italy has been the result of a noble conception. The execution of the scheme has not been without faults, and some of these faults have brought about deplorable, even disastrous, consequences, such as to endanger the stability of the new order. The worst of these attendant errors has been the sudden imposition of a most superficial and vicious culture, under the name of enlightenment and education. The least of the new Government's mistakes has been a squandering of the public money, which, when considered with reference to the country's resources, has perhaps no parallel in the history of nations.

Yet the first idea was large, patriotic, even grand. The men who first steered the ship of the state were honourable, disinterested, devoted—men like Minghetti who will not soon be forgotten—loyal, conservative monarchists, whose thoughts were free from exaggeration, save that they believed almost too blindly in the power of a constitution to build up a kingdom, and credited their fellows almost too readily with a purpose as pure and

blameless as their own. Can more be said for these? I think not. They rest in honourable graves, their doings live in honoured remembrance—would that there had been such another generation to succeed them!

And having said thus much, let us return to the individuals who have played a part in the history of the Saracinesca. They have grown older, some gracefully, some under protest, some most unbecomingly.

In the end of the year 1887 old Leone Saracinesca is still alive, being eighty-two years of age. His massive head has sunk a little between his slightly rounded shoulders, and his white beard is no longer cut short and square, but flows majestically down upon his broad breast. His step is slow, but firm still, and when he looks up suddenly from under his wrinkled lids, the fire is not even yet all gone from his eyes. He is still contradictory by nature, but he has mellowed like rare wine in the long years of prosperity and peace. When the change came in Rome he was in the mountains, at Saracinesca, with his daughter-in-law, Corona, and her children. His son Giovanni, generally known as Prince of Sant' Ilario, was among the volunteers at the last and sat for half a day upon his horse in the Pincio, listening to the bullets that sang over his head, while his men fired stray shots from the parapets of the public garden into the road below. Giovanni is fifty-two years old, but though his hair is grey at the temples and his figure a trifle sturdier and broader than of old, he is little changed. His son Orsino, who will soon be of age, overtops him by a head and shoulders, a dark youth, slender still, but strong and active, the chief person in this portion of my chronicle. Orsino has three brothers of ranging ages of whom the youngest is scarcely twelve years old. Not one girl child has been given to Giovanni and Corona, and they almost wish that one of the sturdy little lads had been a daughter. But old Saracinesca

laughs and shakes his head and says he will not die till his four grandsons are strong enough to bear him to his grave upon their shoulders.

Corona is still beautiful, still dark, still magnificent, though she has reached the age beyond which no woman ever goes until after death. There are few lines in the noble face, and such as are there are not the scars of heart-wounds. Her life, too, has been peaceful and undisturbed by great events these many years. There is, indeed, one perpetual anxiety in her existence, for the old prince is an aged man and she loves him dearly. The tough strength must give way some day and there will be a great mourning in the house of Saracinesca, nor will any mourn the dead more sincerely than Corona. And there is a shade of bitterness in the knowledge that her marvellous beauty is waning. Can she be blamed for that? She has been beautiful so long. What woman who has been first for a quarter of a century can give up her place without a sigh? But much has been given to her to soften the years of transition, and she knows that also, when she looks from her husband to her four boys.

Then, too, it seems more easy to grow old when she catches a glimpse from time to time of Donna Tullia Del Ferice, who wears her years ungracefully, and who was once so near to becoming Giovanni Saracinesca's wife. Donna Tullia is fat and fiery of complexion, uneasily vivacious and unsure of herself. Her disagreeable blue eyes have not softened, nor has the metallic tone of her voice lost its sharpness. Yet she should not be a disappointed woman, for Del Ferice is a power in the land, a member of Parliament, a financier and a successful schemer, whose doors are besieged by parasites and his dinner-table by those who wear fine raiment and dwell in kings' palaces. Del Ferice is the central figure in the great building syndicates which in 1887 are at the height of their power. He juggles

with millions of money, with miles of real estate, with thousands of workmen. He is director of a bank, president of a political club, chairman of half-a-dozen companies, and a deputy in the Chambers. But his face is unnaturally pale, his body is over-corpulent, and he has trouble with his heart. The Del Ferice couple are childless, to their own great satisfaction.

Anastase Gouache, the great painter, is also in Rome. Sixteen years ago he married the love of his life, Faustina Montevarchi, in spite of the strong opposition of her family. But times had changed. A new law existed and the thrice repeated formal request for consent made by Faustina to her mother, freed her from parental authority and brotherly interference. She and her husband passed through some very lean years in the beginning, but fortune has smiled upon them since that. Anastase is very famous. His character has changed little. With the love of the ideal republic in his heart, he shed his blood at Mentana for the great conservative principle; he fired his last shot for the same cause at the Porta Pia on the twentieth of September 1870; a month later he was fighting for France under the gallant Charette—whether for France imperial, regal, or republican he never paused to ask; he was wounded in fighting against the Commune, and decorated for painting the portrait of Gambetta, after which he returned to Rome, cursed politics, and married the woman he loved, which was, on the whole, the wisest course he could have followed. He has two children, both girls, aged now respectively fifteen and thirteen. His virtues are many, but they do not include economy. Though his savings are small and he depends upon his brush, he lives in one wing of an historic palace and gives dinners which are famous. He proposes to reform and become a miser when his daughters are married.

“Misery will be the foundation of my second manner, my angel,” he says

to his wife, when he has done something unusually extravagant.

But Faustina laughs softly and winds her arm about his neck as they look together at the last great picture. Anastase has not grown fat. The gods love him and have promised him eternal youth. He can still buckle round his slim waist the military belt of twenty years ago, and there is scarcely one white thread in his black hair.

San Giacinto, the other Saracinesca, who married Faustina's elder sister Flavia, is in process of making a great fortune, greater perhaps than the one so nearly thrust upon him by old Montevarchi's compact with Meschini the librarian and forger. He had scarcely troubled himself to conceal his opinions before the change of government, being by nature a calm, fearless man, and under the new order he unhesitatingly sided with the Italians, to the great satisfaction of Flavia, who foresaw years of dulness for the mourning party of the Blacks. He had already brought to Rome the two boys who remained to him from his first marriage with Serafina Baldi—the little girl who had been born between the other two children had died in infancy—and the lads had been educated at a military college, and in 1887 are both officers in the Italian cavalry, sturdy and somewhat thick-skulled patriots, but gentlemen nevertheless in spite of the peasant blood. They are tall fellows enough but neither of them has inherited the father's colossal stature, and San Giacinto looks with a very little envy on his young kinsman Orsino, who has outgrown his cousins. This second marriage has brought him issue, a boy and a girl, and the fact that he has now four children to provide for has had much to do with his activity in affairs. He was among the first to see that an enormous fortune was to be made in the first rush for land in the city, and he realised all he possessed, and borrowed to the full extent of his credit to pay the first instalments on the land he

bought, risking everything with the calm determination and cool judgment which lay at the root of his strong character. He was immensely successful, but though he had been bold to recklessness at the right moment, he saw the great crash looming in the near future, and when the many were frantic to buy and invest, no matter at what loss, his millions were in part safely deposited in national bonds, and in part as securely invested in solid and profitable buildings of which the rents are little liable to fluctuation. Brought up to know what money means, he is not easily carried away by enthusiastic reports. He knows that when the hour of fortune is at hand no price is too great to pay for ready capital, but he understands that when the great rush for success begins the psychological moment of finance is already passed. When he dies, if such strength as his can yield to death, he will die the richest man in Italy, and he will leave what is rare in Italian finance, a stainless name.

Of one person more I must speak, who has played a part in this family history. The melancholy Spicca still lives his lonely life in the midst of the social world. He affects to be a little old-fashioned in his dress. His tall thin body stoops ominously and his cadaverous face is more grave and ascetic than ever. He is said to have been suffering from a mortal disease these fifteen years, but still he goes everywhere, reads everything, and knows every one. He is between sixty and seventy years old, but no one knows his precise age. The foils he once used so well hang untouched and rusty above his fireplace, but his reputation survives the lost strength of his supple wrist, and there are few in Rome, brave men or harebrained youths, who would willingly anger him even now. He is still the great duellist of his day; the emaciated fingers might still find their old grip upon a sword-hilt, the long, listless arm might perhaps once more shoot out with lightning speed, the dull eye

might once again light up at the clash of steel. Peaceable, charitable when none are at hand to see him give, gravely gentle now in manner, Count Spicca is thought dangerous still. But he is indeed very lonely in his old age, and if the truth be told his fortune seems to have suffered sadly of late years, so that he rarely leaves Rome, even in the hot summer, and it is very long since he spent six weeks in Paris or risked a handful of gold at Monte Carlo. Yet his life is not over, and he has still a part to play, for his own sake and for the sake of another, as shall soon appear more clearly.

## CHAPTER II.

ORSINO SARACINESCA's education was almost completed. It had been of the modern kind, for his father had early recognised that it would be a disadvantage to the young man in after life if he did not follow the course of study and pass the examinations required of every Italian subject who wishes to hold office in his own country. Accordingly, though he had not been sent to public schools, Orsino had been regularly entered since his childhood for the public examinations and had passed them all in due order, with great difficulty and indifferent credit. After this preliminary work he had been at an English University for four terms, not with any view to his obtaining a degree after completing the necessary residence, but in order that he might perfect himself in the English language, associate with young men of his own age and social standing, though of different nationality, and acquire that final polish which is so highly valued in the human furniture of society's temples.

Orsino was not more highly gifted as to intelligence than many young men of his age and class. Like many of them he spoke English admirably, French tolerably, and Italian with a somewhat Roman twang. He had learned a little German and was rapidly forgetting it again; Latin and



Greek had been exhibited to him as dead languages, and he felt no more inclination to assist in their resurrection than is felt by most boys in our day. He had been taught geography in the practical, continental manner, by being obliged to draw maps from memory. He had been instructed in history, not by parallels, but as it were by tangents, a method productive of odd results, and he had advanced just far enough in the study of mathematics to be thoroughly confused by the terms "differentiation" and "integration." Besides these subjects, a multitude of moral and natural sciences had been made to pass in a sort of panorama before his intellectual vision, including physics, chemistry, logic, rhetoric, ethics and political economy, with a view to cultivating in him the spirit of the age. The Ministry of Public Instruction having decreed that the name of God shall be forever eliminated from all modern books in use in Italian schools and universities, Orsino's religious instruction had been imparted at home and had at least the advantage of being homogeneous.

It must not be supposed that Orsino's father and mother were satisfied with this sort of education. But it was not easy to foresee what social and political changes might come about before the boy reached mature manhood. Neither Giovanni nor his wife were of the absolutely *intransigent* way of thinking. They saw no imperative reason to prevent their sons from joining at some future time in the public life of their country, though they themselves preferred not to associate with the party at present in power. Moreover Giovanni Saracinesca saw that the abolition of primogeniture had put an end to hereditary idleness, and that although his sons would be rich enough to do nothing if they pleased, yet his grandchildren would probably have to choose between work and genteel poverty, if it pleased the fates to multiply the race. He could indeed leave one-half of his

wealth intact to Orsino, but the law required that the other half should be equally divided among all; and as the same thing would take place in the second generation, unless a reactionary revolution intervened, the property would before long be divided into very small moieties indeed. For Giovanni had no idea of imposing celibacy upon his younger sons, still less of exerting any influence he possessed to make them enter the Church. He was too broad in his views for that. They promised to turn out as good men in a struggle as the majority of those who would be opposed to them in life, and they should fight their own battles unhampered by parental authority or caste prejudice.

Many years earlier Giovanni had expressed his convictions in regard to the change of order then imminent. He had said that he would fight as long as there was anything to fight for, but that if the change came he would make the best of it. He was now keeping his word. He had fought so far as fighting had been possible, and had sincerely wished that his warlike career might have offered more excitement and opportunity for personal distinction than had been afforded him in spending an afternoon on horseback listening to the singing of bullets overhead. His amateur soldiering was over long ago, but he was strong, brave, and intelligent, and if he had been convinced that a second and more radical revolution could accomplish any good result, he would have been capable of devoting himself to its cause with a single-heartedness not usual in these days. But he was not convinced. He therefore lived a quiet life, making the best of the present, improving his lands and doing his best to bring up his sons in such a way as to give them a chance of success when the struggle should come. Orsino was his eldest born and the results of modern education became apparent in him first, as was inevitable.

Orsino was at this time not quite

twenty-one years of age, but the important day was not far distant, and in order to leave a lasting memorial of the attaining of his majority Prince Saracinesca had decreed that Corona should receive a portrait of her eldest son executed by the celebrated Anastase Gouache. To this end the young man spent three mornings in every week in the artist's palatial studio, a place about as different from the latter's first den in the Via San Basilio as the Basilica of Saint Peter is different from a roadside chapel in the Abruzzi. Those who have seen the successful painter of the nineteenth century in his glory will have less difficulty in imagining the scene of Gouache's labours than the writer finds in describing it. The workroom is a hall, the ceiling is a vault thirty feet high, the pavement is of polished marble; the light enters by north windows which would not look small in a good-sized church, the doors would admit a carriage and pair, the tapestries upon the walls would cover the front of a modern house. Everything is on a grand scale, of the best period, of the most genuine description. Three or four originals of great masters, of Titian, of Rubens, of Van Dyck, stand on huge easels in the most favourable lights. Some scores of matchless antique fragments, both of bronze and marble, are placed here and there upon superb carved tables and shelves of the sixteenth century. The only reproduction visible in the place is a very perfect cast of the Hermes of Olympia. The carpets are all of Shiraz, Sinna, Gjordez, or old Baku—no common thing of Smyrna, no unclean aniline production of Russo-Asiatic commerce disturbs the universal harmony. In the full light upon the wall hangs a single silk carpet of wonderful tints, famous in the history of Eastern collections, and upon it is set at a slanting angle a single priceless Damascus blade—a sword to possess which an Arab or a Circassian would commit countless crimes. Anastase Gouache is magni-

ficent in all his tastes and in all his ways. His studio and his dwelling are his only estate, his only capital, his only wealth, and he does not take the trouble to conceal the fact. The very idea of a fixed income is as distasteful to him as the possibility of possessing it is distant and visionary. There is always money in abundance, money for Faustina's horses and carriages, money for Gouache's select dinners, money for the expensive fancies of both. The paint-pot is the mine, the brush is the miner's pick, and the vein has never failed, nor the hand trembled in working it. A golden youth, a golden river flowing softly to the red-gold sunset of the end—that is life as it seems to Anastase and Faustina.

On the morning which opens this chronicle, Anastase was standing before his canvas, palette and brushes in hand, considering the nature of the human face in general and of young Orsino's face in particular.

"I have known your father and mother for centuries," observed the painter with a fine disregard of human limitations. "Your father is the brown type of a dark man, and your mother is the olive type of a dark woman. They are no more alike than a Red Indian and an Arab, but you are like both. Are you brown or are you olive, my friend? That is the question. I would like to see you angry, or in love, or losing at play. Those things bring out the real complexion."

Orsino laughed and showed a remarkably solid set of teeth. But he did not find anything to say.

"I would like to know the truth about your complexion," said Anastase, meditatively.

"I have no particular reason for being angry," answered Orsino, "and I am not in love——"

"At your age! Is it possible?"

"Quite. But I will play cards with you if you like," concluded the young man.

"No," returned the other. "It

would be of no use. You would win, and if you happened to win much, I should be in a diabolical scrape. But I wish you would fall in love. You should see how I would handle the green shadows under your eyes."

"It is rather short notice."

"The shorter the better. I used to think that the only real happiness in life lay in getting into trouble, and the only real interest in getting out."

"And have you changed your mind?"

"I? No. My mind has changed me. It is astonishing how a man may love his wife in favourable circumstances."

Anastase laid down his brushes and lit a cigarette. Rubens would have sipped a few drops of Rhenish from a Venetian glass. Teniers would have lit a clay pipe. Dürer would perhaps have swallowed a pint of Nuremberg beer, and Greuse or Mignard would have resorted to their snuff-boxes. We do not know what Michelangelo or Perugino did in the circumstances, but it is tolerably evident that the man of the nineteenth century cannot think without talking and cannot talk without cigarettes. Therefore Anastase began to smoke and Orsino, being young and imitative, followed his example.

"You have been an exceptionally fortunate man," remarked the latter, who was not old enough to be anything but cynical in his views of life.

"Do you think so? Yes—I have been fortunate. But I do not like to think that my happiness has been so very exceptional. The world is a good place, full of happy people. It must be—otherwise purgatory and hell would be useless institutions."

"You do not suppose all people to be good as well as happy then," said Orsino with a laugh.

"Good! What is goodness, my friend? One half of the theologians tell us that we shall be happy if we are good, and the other half assure us that the only way to be good is to abjure earthly happiness. If you will believe me, you will never commit the

supreme error of choosing between the two methods. Take the world as it is and do not ask too many questions of the fates. If you are willing to be happy, happiness will come in its own shape."

Orsino's young face expressed rather contemptuous amusement. At twenty, happiness is a dull word, and satisfaction spells excitement.

"That is the way people talk," he said. "You have got everything by fighting for it, and you advise me to sit still till the fruit drops into my mouth."

"I was obliged to fight. Everything comes to you naturally—fortune, rank—everything, including marriage. Why should you lift a hand?"

"A man cannot possibly be happy who marries before he is thirty years old," answered Orsino with conviction. "How do you expect me to occupy myself during the next ten years?"

"That is true," Gouache replied, somewhat thoughtfully, as though the consideration had not struck him.

"If I were an artist, it would be different."

"Oh, very different. I agree with you." Anastase smiled good-humouredly.

"Because I should have talent—and a talent is an occupation in itself."

"I dare say you would have talent," Gouache answered still laughing.

"No—I did not mean it in that way—I mean that when a man has a talent it makes him think of something besides himself."

"I fancy there is more truth in that remark than either you or I would at first think," said the painter in a meditative tone.

"Of course there is," returned the youthful philosopher, with more enthusiasm than he would have cared to show if he had been talking to a woman. "What is talent but a combination of the desire to do and the power to accomplish? As for genius, it is never selfish when it is at work."

"Is that reflection your own?"

"I think so," answered Orsino mod-

estly. He was secretly pleased that a man of the artist's experience and reputation should be struck by his remark.

"I do not think I agree with you," said Gouache.

Orsino's expression changed a little. He was disappointed, but he said nothing.

"I think that a great genius is often ruthless. Do you remember how Beethoven congratulated a young composer after the first performance of his opera? 'I like your opera—I will write music to it.' That was a fine instance of unselfishness, was it not? I can see the young man's face——" Anastase smiled.

"Beethoven was not at work when he made the remark," observed Orsino, defending himself.

"Nor am I," said Gouache, taking up his brushes again. "If you will resume the pose—so—thoughtful but bold—imagine that you are already an ancestor contemplating posterity from the height of a nobler age—you understand? Try and look as if you were already framed and hanging in the Saracinesca gallery between a Titian and a Giorgione."

Orsino resumed his position and scowled at Anastase with a good will.

"Not quite such a terrible frown, perhaps," suggested the latter. "When you do that, you certainly look like the gentleman who murdered the Colonna in a street brawl—I forget how long ago. You have his portrait. But I fancy the Princess would prefer—yes—that is more natural. You have her eyes. How the world raved about her twenty years ago—and raves still, for that matter."

"She is the most beautiful woman in the world," said Orsino. There was something in the boy's unaffected admiration of his mother which contrasted pleasantly with his youthful affectation of cynicism and indifference. His handsome face lighted up a little, and the painter worked rapidly.

But the expression was not lasting, Orsino was at the age when most

young men take the trouble to cultivate a manner, and the look of somewhat contemptuous gravity which he had lately acquired was already becoming habitual. Since all men in general have adopted the fashion of the moustache, youths who are still waiting for the full crop seem to have difficulty in managing their mouths. Some draw in their lips with that air of unnatural sternness observable in rough weather among passengers on board ship, just before they relinquish the struggle and retire from public life. Others contract their mouths to the shape of a heart, while there are yet others who lose control of the pendant lower lip and are content to look like idiots, while expecting the hairy growth which is to make them look like men. Orsino had chosen the least objectionable idiosyncrasy and had elected to be of a stern countenance. When he forgot himself he was singularly handsome, and Gouache lay in wait for his moments of forgetfulness.

"You are quite right," said the Frenchman. "From the classic point of view your mother was and is the most beautiful dark woman in the world. For myself—well in the first place, you are her son, and secondly I am an artist and not a critic. The painter's tongue is his brush and his words are colours."

"What were you going to say about my mother?" asked Orsino with some curiosity.

"Oh—nothing. Well, if you must hear it, the Princess represents my classical ideal, but not my personal ideal. I have admired some one else more."

"Donna Faustina?" inquired Orsino.

"Ah, well, my friend—she is my wife, you see. That always makes a great difference in the degree of admiration——"

"Generally in the opposite direction," Orsino observed in a tone of elderly unbelief.

Gouache had just put his brush into his mouth and held it between his teeth as a poodle carries a stick.

while he used his thumb on the canvas. The modern painter paints with everything, not excepting his fingers. He glanced at his model and then at his work, and got his effect before he answered.

"You are very hard upon marriage," he said quietly. "Have you tried it?"

"Not yet. I will wait as long as possible, before I do. It is not every one who has your luck."

"There was something more than luck in my marriage. We loved each other, it is true, but there were difficulties—you have no idea what difficulties there were. But Faustina was brave and I caught a little courage from her. Do you know that when the Serristori barracks were blown up she ran out alone to find me merely because she thought I might have been killed? I found her in the ruins, praying for me. It was sublime."

"I have heard that. She was very brave——"

"And I a poor Zouave—and a poorer painter. Are there such women nowadays? Bah! I have not known them. We used to meet at churches and exchange two words while her maid was gone to get her a chair. Oh, the good old time! And then the separations—the taking of Rome, when the old Princess carried all the family off to England and stayed there while we were fighting for poor France—and the coming back and the months of waiting, and the notes dropped from her window at midnight, and the great quarrel with her family when we took advantage of the new law. And then the marriage itself—what a scandal in Rome! But for the Princess, your mother, I do not know what we should have done. She brought Faustina to the church and drove us to the station in her own carriage—in the face of society. They say that Ascanio Bellegra hung about the door of the church while we were being married, but he had not the courage to come in for fear of his mother. We went to Naples and lived on salad and love—and we had very little else for a year

or two. I was not much known, then, except in Rome, and Roman society refused to have its portrait painted by the adventurer who had run away with a daughter of Casa Montevarchi. Perhaps, if we had been rich, we should have hated each other by this time. But we had to live for each other in those days, for every one was against us. I painted, and she kept house—that English blood is always practical in a desert. And it was a desert. The cooking—it would have made a billiard-ball's hair stand on end with astonishment. She made the salad, and then evolved the roast from the inner consciousness. I painted a chaudfroid on an old plate. It was well done—the transparent quality of the jelly and the delicate ortolans imprisoned within, imploring dissection. Well, must I tell you? We threw it away. It was martyrdom. Saint Anthony's position was enviable compared with ours. Beside us that good man would have seemed but a humbug. Yet we lived through it all. I repeat it. We lived, and we were happy. It is amazing how a man may love his wife."

Anastase had told his story with many pauses, working hard while he spoke, for though he was quite in earnest in all he said, his chief object was to distract the young man's attention, so as to bring out his natural expression. Having exhausted one of the colours he needed, he drew back and contemplated his work, Orsino seemed lost in thought.

"What are you thinking about?" asked the painter.

"Do you think I am too old to become an artist?" inquired the young man.

"You? Who knows? But the times are too old. It is the same thing."

"I do not understand."

"You are in love with the life—not with the profession. But the life is not the same now, nor the art either. Bah! In a few years I shall be out of fashion. I know it. Then we will



go back to first principles. A garret to live in, bread and salad for dinner. Of course—what do you expect? That need not prevent us from living in a palace so long as we can."

Thereupon Anastase Gouache hummed a very lively little song as he squeezed a few colours from the tubes. Orsino's face betrayed his discontentment.

"I was not in earnest," he said. "At least, not as to becoming an artist. I only asked the question to be sure that you would answer it just as everybody answers all questions of the kind—by discouraging my wish to do anything for myself."

"Why should you do anything? You are so rich!"

"What everybody says! Do you know what we rich men, or we men who are to be rich, are expected to be? Farmers. It is not gay."

"It would be my dream—pastoral, you know—Normandy cows, a river with reeds, perpetual Angelus, bread and milk for supper. I adore milk. A nymph here and there—at your age, it is permitted. My dear friend, why not be a farmer?"

Orsino laughed a little, in spite of himself.

"I suppose that is an artist's idea of farming."

"As near the truth as a farmer's idea of art, I daresay," retorted Gouache.

"We see you paint, but you never see us at work. That is the difference—but that is not the question. Whatever I propose, I get the same answer. I imagine you will permit me to dislike farming as a profession?"

"For the sake of argument, only," said Gouache gravely.

"Good. For the sake of argument. We will suppose that I am myself in all respects what I am, excepting that I am never to have any land, and only enough money to buy cigarettes. I say, 'Let me take a profession. Let me be a soldier.' Every one rises up and protests against the idea of a Saracinesca serving in the Italian

army. Why? 'Remember that your father was a volunteer officer under Pope Pius IX.' It is comic. He spent an afternoon on the Pincio for his convictions, and then retired into private life. 'Let me serve in a foreign army—France, Austria, Russia. I do not care.' They are more horrified than ever. 'You have not a spark of patriotism! To serve a foreign power! How dreadful! And as for the Russians, they are all heretics.' 'Perhaps they are. I will try diplomacy.' 'What! Sacrifice your convictions? Become the blind instrument of a scheming, dishonest ministry? It is unworthy of a Saracinesca!' 'I will think no more about it. Let me be a lawyer and enter public life.' 'A lawyer indeed! Will you wrangle in public with notaries' sons, defend murderers and burglars, and take fees like the old men who write letters for the peasants under a green umbrella in the street? It would be almost better to turn musician and give concerts.' 'The Church, perhaps?' I suggest. 'The Church? Are you not the heir, and will you not be the head of the family some day? You must be mad.' 'Then give me a sum of money and let me try my luck with my cousin San Giacinto.' 'Business? If you make money it is a degradation, and with these new laws you cannot afford to lose it. Besides, you will have enough of business when you have to manage your estates.' So all my questions are answered, and I am condemned at twenty to be a farmer for my natural life. I say so. 'A farmer, forsooth! Have you not the world before you? Have you not received the most liberal education? Are you not rich? How can you take such a narrow view! Come out to the Villa and look at those young thoroughbreds, and afterwards we will drop in at the club before dinner. Then there is that reception at the old Principessa Befana's to-night, and the Duchessa della Seccatura is also at home.' That is my life, Monsieur Gouache. There you have the question,

the answer and the result. Admit that it is not gay."

"It is very serious, on the contrary," answered Gouache who had listened to the detached Jeremiad with more curiosity and interest than he often showed. "I see nothing for it, but for you to fall in love without losing a single moment."

Orsino laughed a little harshly.

"I am in the humour, I assure you," he answered.

"Well, then—what are you waiting for?" inquired Gouache, looking at him.

"What for? For an object for my affections, of course. That is rather necessary in the circumstances."

"You may not wait long, if you will consent to stay here another quarter of an hour," said Anastase with a laugh. "A lady is coming, whose portrait I am painting—an interesting woman—tolerably beautiful—rather mysterious—here she is, you can have a good look at her before you make up your mind."

Anastase took the half-finished portrait of Orsino from the easel and put another in its place, considerably further advanced in execution. Orsino lit a cigarette in order to quicken his judgment, and looked at the canvas.

The picture was decidedly striking, and one felt at once that it must be a good likeness. Gouache was evidently proud of it. It represented a woman, who was certainly not yet thirty years of age, in full dress, seated in a high carved chair against a warm dark background. A mantle of some sort of heavy claret-coloured brocade lined with fur, was draped across one of the beautiful shoulders, leaving the other bare, the scant dress of the period scarcely breaking the graceful lines from the throat to the soft white hand, of which the pointed fingers hung carelessly over the carved extremity of the arm of the chair. The lady's hair was auburn, her eyes distinctly yellow. The face was an unusual one and not without attraction,

very pale, with a full red mouth too wide for perfect beauty, but well modelled—almost too well, Gouache thought. The nose was of no distinct type, and was the least significant feature in the face, but the forehead was broad and massive, the chin soft, prominent and round, the brows much arched and divided by a vertical shadow which, in the original, might be the first indication of a tiny wrinkle. Orsino fancied that one eye or the other wandered a very little, but he could not tell which—the slight defect made the glance disquieting and yet attractive. Altogether it was one of those faces which to one man say too little and to another too much.

Orsino affected to gaze upon the portrait with unconcern, but in reality he was oddly fascinated by it, and Gouache did not fail to see the truth.

"You had better go away, my friend," he said, with a smile. "She will be here in a few minutes and you will certainly lose your heart if you see her."

"What is her name?" asked Orsino, paying no attention to the remark.

"Donna Maria Consuelo—something or other—a string of names ending in Aragona. I call her Madame d'Aragona for shortness, and she does not seem to object."

"Married? And Spanish?"

"I suppose so," answered Gouache. "A widow, I believe. She is not Italian and not French, so she must be Spanish."

"The name does not say much. Many people put 'd'Aragona' after their names—some cousins of ours, among others—they are Aranjuez d'Aragona—my father's mother was of that family."

"I think that is the name—Aranjuez. Indeed I am sure of it, for Faustina remarked that she might be related to you."

"It is odd. We have not heard of her being in Rome—and I am not sure who she is. Has she been here long?"

"I have known her a month—since she first came to my studio. She lives in a hotel, and she comes alone, except when I need the dress and then she brings her maid, an odd creature who never speaks and seems to understand no known language."

"It is an interesting face. Do you mind if I stay till she comes? We may really be cousins, you know."

"By all means—you can ask her. The relationship would be with her husband, I suppose."

"True. I had not thought of that; and he is dead, you say?"

Gouache did not answer, for at that moment the lady's footfall was heard upon the marble floor, soft, quick and decided. She paused a moment in the middle of the room when she saw that the artist was not alone. He went forward to meet her and asked leave to present Orsino, with that polite indistinctness which leaves to the persons introduced the task of discovering one another's names.

Orsino looked into the lady's eyes and saw that the slight peculiarity of the glance was real and not due to any error of Gouache's drawing. He recognised each feature in turn in the one look he gave at the face before he bowed, and he saw that the portrait was indeed very good. He was not subject to shyness.

"We should be cousins, madame," he said. "My father's mother was an Aranjuez d'Aragona."

"Indeed?" said the lady with calm indifference, looking critically at the picture of herself.

"I am Orsino Saracinesca," said the young man, watching her with some admiration.

"Indeed?" she repeated, a shade less coldly. "I think I have heard my poor husband say that he was connected with your family. What do you think of my portrait? Every one has tried to paint me and failed, but my friend, Monsieur Gouache, is succeeding. He has reproduced my hideous nose and my dreadful mouth with a masterly exactness. No, my dear

Monsieur Gouache, it is a compliment I pay you. I am in earnest. I do not want a portrait of the Venus of Milo with red hair, nor of the Minerva Medica with yellow eyes, nor of an imaginary Medea in a fur cloak. I want myself, just as I am. That is exactly what you are doing for me. Myself and I have lived so long together that I desire a little memento of the acquaintance."

"You can afford to speak lightly of what is so precious to others," said Gouache gallantly. Madame d'Aranjuez sank into the carved chair Orsino had occupied.

"This dear Gouache—he is charming, is he not?" she said with a little laugh. Orsino looked at her.

"Gouache is right," he thought, with the assurance of his years. "It would be amusing to fall in love with her."

### CHAPTER III.

GOUACHE was far more interested in his work than in the opinions which his two visitors might entertain of each other. He looked at the lady fixedly, moved his easel, raised the picture a few inches higher from the ground and looked again. Orsino watched the proceedings from a little distance, debating whether he should go away or remain. Much depended upon Madame d'Aragona's character, he thought, and of this he knew nothing. Some women are attracted by indifference, and to go away would be to show a disinclination to press the acquaintance. Others, he reflected, prefer the assurance of the man who always stays, even without an invitation, rather than lose his chance. On the other hand a sitting in a studio is not exactly like a meeting in a drawing room. The painter has a sort of traditional, exclusive right to his sitter's sole attention. The sitter, too, if a woman, enjoys the privilege of sacrificing one-half of her good looks in a bad light, to favour the other side which is presented to the artist's view, and the third person, if there be one.

has a provoking habit of so placing himself as to receive the least flattering impression. Hence the great unpopularity of the third person—or “the third inconvenience,” as the Romans call him.

Orsino stood still for a few moments, wondering whether either of the two would ask him to sit down. As they did not, he was annoyed with them and determined to stay, if only for five minutes. He took up his position in a deep seat under the high window, and watched Madame d'Aragona's profile. Neither she nor Gouache made any remark. Gouache began to brush over the face of his picture. Orsino felt that the silence was becoming awkward. He began to regret that he had remained, for he discovered from his present position that the lady's nose was indeed her defective feature.

“You do not mind my staying a few minutes?” he said, with a vague interrogation.

“Ask madame, rather,” answered Gouache, brushing away in a lively manner. Madame said nothing, and seemed not to have heard.

“Am I indiscreet?” asked Orsino.

“How? No. Why should you not remain? Only, if you please, sit where I can see you. Thanks. I do not like to feel that some one is looking at me and that I cannot look at him, if I please—and as for me, I am nailed in my position. How can I turn my head? Gouache is very severe.”

“You may have heard, madame, that a beautiful woman is most beautiful in repose,” said Gouache.

Orsino was annoyed, for he had of course wished to make exactly the same remark. But they were talking in French, and the Frenchman had the advantage of speed.

“And how about an ugly woman?” asked Madame d'Aragona.

“Motion is most becoming to her—rapid motion—towards the door,” answered the artist.

Orsino had changed his position and was standing behind Gouache.

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“I wish you would sit down,” said the latter, after a short pause. “I do not like to feel that any one is standing behind me when I am at work. It is a weakness, but I cannot help it. Do you believe in mental suggestion, madame?”

“What is that?” asked Madame d'Aragona vaguely.

“I always imagine that a person standing behind me when I am at work is making me see everything as he sees,” answered Gouache, not attempting to answer the question.

Orsino, driven from pillar to post, had again moved away.

“And do you believe in such absurd superstitions?” inquired Madame d'Aragona with a contemptuous curl of her heavy lips. “Monsieur de Saracinesca, will you not sit down? You make me a little nervous.”

Gouache raised his finely marked eyebrows almost imperceptibly at the odd form of address, which betrayed ignorance either of worldly usage or else of Orsino's individuality. He stepped back from the canvas and moved a chair forward.

“Sit here, Prince,” he said. “Madame can see you, and you will not be behind me.”

Orsino took the proffered seat without any remark. Madame d'Aragona's expression did not change, though she was perfectly well aware that Gouache had intended to correct her manner of addressing the young man. The latter was slightly annoyed. What difference could it make? It was tactless of Gouache, he thought, for the lady might be angry.

“Are you spending the winter in Rome, madame?” he asked. He was conscious that the question lacked originality, but no other presented itself to him.

“The winter?” repeated Madame d'Aragona dreamily. “Who knows? I am here at present, at the mercy of the great painter. That is all I know. Shall I be here next month, next week? I cannot tell. I know no one. I have never been here before.

It is dull. This was my object," she added, after a short pause. "When it is accomplished I will consider other matters. I may be obliged to accompany their Royal Highnesses to Egypt in January. That is next month, is it not?"

It was so very far from clear who the royal highnesses in question might be, that Orsino glanced at Gouache, to see whether he understood. But Gouache was imperturbable.

"January, madame, follows December," he answered. "The fact is confirmed by the observations of many centuries. Even in my own experience it has occurred forty-seven times in succession."

Orsino laughed a little, and as Madame d'Aragona's eyes met his the red lips smiled, without parting.

"He is always laughing at me," she said pleasantly.

Gouache was painting with great alacrity. The smile was becoming to her and he caught it as it passed. It must be allowed that she permitted it to linger, as though she understood his wish, but as she was looking at Orsino, he was pleased.

"If you will permit me to say it, madame," he observed, "I have never seen eyes like yours."

He endeavoured to lose himself in their depths as he spoke. Madame d'Aragona was not in the least annoyed by the remark, nor by the look.

"What is there so very unusual about my eyes?" she inquired. The smile grew a little more faint and thoughtful but did not disappear.

"In the first place, I have never seen eyes of a golden-yellow colour."

"Tigers have yellow eyes," observed Madame d'Aragona.

"My acquaintance with that animal is at second-hand—slight, to say the least."

"You have never shot one?"

"Never, madame. They do not abound in Rome—nor even, I believe, in Albano. My father killed one when he was a young man."

"Prince Saracinesca?"

"Sant' Ilario. My grandfather is still alive."

"How splendid! I adore strong races."

"It is very interesting," observed Gouache, poking the stick of a brush into the eye of his picture. "I have painted three generations of the family, I who speak to you, and I hope to paint the fourth if Don Orsino here can be cured of his cynicism and induced to marry Donna—what is her name?" He turned to the young man.

"She has none—and she is likely to remain nameless," answered Orsino gloomily.

"We will call her Donna Ignota," suggested Madame d'Aragona.

"And build altars to the unknown love," added Gouache.

Madame d'Aragona smiled faintly, but Orsino persisted in looking grave.

"It seems to be an unpleasant subject, Prince."

"Very unpleasant, madame," answered Orsino shortly.

Thereupon Madame d'Aragona looked at Gouache and raised her brows a little as though to ask a question, knowing perfectly well that Orsino was watching her. The young man could not see the painter's eyes, and the latter did not betray by any gesture that he was answering the silent interrogation.

"Then I have eyes like a tiger, you say. You frighten me. How disagreeable—to look like a wild beast!"

"It is a prejudice," returned Orsino. "One hears people say of a woman that she is beautiful as a tigress."

"An idea!" exclaimed Gouache, interrupting. "Shall I change the damask cloak to a tiger's skin? One claw just hanging over the white shoulder—Omphale, you know—in a modern drawing-room—a small cast of the Farnese Hercules upon a bracket, there, on the right. Decidedly, here is an idea. Do you permit, madame?"

"Anything you like—only do not spoil the likeness," answered Madame



d'Aragona, leaning back in her chair, and looking sleepily at Orsino from beneath her heavy, half-closed lids.

"You will spoil the whole picture," said Orsino, rather anxiously.

Gouache laughed.

"What harm if I do? I can restore it in five minutes."

"Five minutes!"

"An hour, if you insist upon accuracy of statement," replied Gouache with a shade of annoyance.

He had an idea and, like most people whom fate occasionally favours with that rare commodity, he did not like to be disturbed in the realisation of it. He was already squeezing out quantities of tawny colours upon his palette.

"I am a passive instrument," said Madame d'Aragona. "He does what he pleases. These men of genius—what would you have? Yesterday a gown from Worth—to-day a tiger's skin—indeed, I tremble for to-morrow."

She laughed a little and turned her head away.

"You need not fear," answered Gouache, daubing in his new idea with an enormous brush. "Fashions change,—woman endures,—beauty is eternal. There is nothing which may not be made becoming to a beautiful woman."

"My dear Gouache, you are insufferable. You are always telling me that I am beautiful. Look at my nose."

"Yes. I am looking at it."

"And my mouth."

"I look,—I see,—I admire. Have you any other personal observation to make? How many claws has a tiger, Don Orsino? Quick! I am painting the thing."

"One less than a woman."

Madame d'Aragona looked at the young man a moment, and broke into a laugh.

"There is a charming speech. I like that better than Gouache's flattery."

"And yet you admit that the portrait is like you," said Gouache.

"Perhaps I flatter you, too."

"Ah! I had not thought of that."

"You should be more modest."

"I lose myself——"

"Where?"

"In your eyes, madame. One, two, three, four—are you sure a tiger has only four claws? Where is the creature's thumb—what do you call it? It looks awkward."

"The dew-claw?" asked Orsino. "It is higher up, behind the paw. You would hardly see it in the skin."

"But a cat has five claws," said Madame d'Aragona. "Is not a tiger a cat? We must have the thing right, you know, if it is to be done at all."

"Has a cat five claws?" asked Anastase, appealing anxiously to Orsino.

"Of course, but you would only see four on the skin."

"I insist upon knowing," said Madame d'Aragona. "This is dreadful! Has no one got a tiger? What sort of studio is this—with no tiger?"

"I am not Sarah Bernhardt, nor the Emperor of Siam," observed Gouache, with a laugh.

But Madame d'Aragona was not satisfied.

"I am sure you could procure me one, Prince," she said, turning to Orsino. "I am sure you could, if you would! I shall cry if I do not have one, and it will be your fault."

"Would you like the animal alive or dead?" inquired Orsino gravely, and he rose from his seat.

"Ah, I knew you could procure the thing!" she exclaimed with grateful enthusiasm. "Alive or dead, Gouache? Quick—decide!"

"As you please, madame. If you decide to have him alive, I will ask permission to exchange a few words with my wife and children, while some one goes for a priest."

"You are sublime to-day. Dead, then, if you please, Prince. Quite dead—but do not say that I was afraid——"

"Afraid? With a Saracinesca and a Gouache to defend your life, madame? You are not serious."

Orsino took his hat.

"I shall be back in a quarter of an hour," he said, as he bowed and went out.

Madame d'Aragona watched his tall young figure till he disappeared.

"He does not lack spirit, your young friend," she observed.

"No member of that family ever did, I think," Gouache answered. "They are a remarkable race."

"And he is the only son?"

"Oh, no! He has three younger brothers."

"Poor fellow! I suppose the fortune is not very large."

"I have no means of knowing," replied Gouache indifferently. "Their palace is historic. Their equipages are magnificent. That is all that foreigners see of Roman families."

"But you know them intimately?"

"Intimately—that is saying too much. I have painted their portraits."

Madame d'Aragona wondered why he was so reticent, for she knew that he had himself married the daughter of a Roman prince, and she concluded that he must know much of the Romans.

"Do you think he will bring the tiger?" she asked presently.

"He is quite capable of bringing a whole menagerie of tigers for you to choose from."

"How interesting. I like men who stop at nothing. It was really unpardonable of you to suggest the idea and then to tell me calmly that you had no model for it."

In the meantime Orsino had descended the stairs and was hailing a passing cab. He debated for a moment what he should do. It chanced that at that time there was actually a collection of wild beasts to be seen in the Prati di Castello, and Orsino supposed that the owner might be induced, for a large consideration, to part with one of his tigers. He even imagined that he might shoot the beast and bring it back in the cab. But, in the first place, he was not provided with an adequate sum of money, nor

did he know exactly how to lay his hand on so large a sum as might be necessary at a moment's notice. He was still under age, and his allowance had not been calculated with a view to his buying menageries. Moreover he considered that even if his pockets had been full of bank notes, the idea was ridiculous, and he was rather ashamed of his youthful impulse. It occurred to him that what was necessary for the picture was not the carcass of the tiger but the skin, and he remembered that such a skin lay on the floor in his father's private room—the spoil of the animal Giovanni Saracinesca had shot in his youth. It had been well cared for and was a fine specimen.

"Palazzo Saracinesca," he said to the cabman.

Now it chanced, as such things will chance in the inscrutable ways of fate, that Sant' Ilario was just then in that very room and busy with his correspondence. Orsino had hoped to carry off what he wanted, without being questioned, in order to save time, but he now found himself obliged to explain his errand.

Sant' Ilario looked up in some surprise as his son entered.

"Well, Orsino! Is anything the matter?" he asked.

"Nothing serious, father. I want to borrow your tiger's skin for Gouache. Will you lend it to me?"

"Of course. But what in the world does Gouache want it for? Is he painting you in skins—the primeval youth of the forest?"

"No—not exactly. The fact is, there is a lady there. Gouache talks of painting her as a modern Omphale, with a tiger's skin and a cast of Hercules in the background——"

"Hercules wore a lion's skin—not a tiger's. He killed the Nemean lion."

"Did he?" inquired Orsino indifferently. "It is all the same—they do not know it, and they want a tiger. When I left they were debating whether they wanted it alive or dead. I thought of buying one at the Prati di Castello, but it seemed cheaper to

borrow the skin of you. May I take it?"

Sant' Ilario laughed. Orsino rolled up the great hide and carried it to the door.

"Who is the lady, my boy?"

"I never saw her before—a certain Donna Maria d'Aranjuez d'Aragona. I fancy she must be a kind of cousin. Do you know anything about her?"

"I never heard of such a person. Is that her own name?"

"No—she seems to be somebody's widow."

"That is definite. What is she like?"

"Passably handsome—yellow eyes, reddish hair, one eye wanders."

"What an awful picture! Do not fall in love with her, Orsino."

"No fear of that—but she is amusing, and she wants the tiger."

"You seem to be in a hurry," observed Sant' Ilario, considerably amused.

"Naturally. They are waiting for me."

"Well, go as fast as you can—never keep a woman waiting. By the way, bring the skin back. I would rather you bought twenty live tigers at the Prati than lose that old thing."

Orsino promised and was soon in his cab on the way to Gouache's studio, having the skin rolled up on his knees, the head hanging out on one side and the tail on the other, to the infinite interest of the people in the street. He was just congratulating himself on having wasted so little time in conversation with his father, when the figure of a tall woman walking towards him on the pavement arrested his attention. His cab must pass close by her, and there was no mistaking his mother at a hundred yards' distance. She saw him too, and made a sign with her parasol for him to stop.

"Good-morning, Orsino," said the sweet deep voice.

"Good-morning, mother," he answered, as he descended hat in hand, and kissed the gloved fingers she extended to him.

He could not help thinking, as he looked at her, that she was infinitely more beautiful even now than Madame d'Aragona. As for Corona, it seemed to her that there was no man on earth to compare with her eldest son, except Giovanni himself, and there all comparison ceased. Their eyes met affectionately and it would have been hard to say which was the more proud of the other, the son of his mother, or the mother of her son. Nevertheless Orsino was in a hurry. Anticipating all questions he told her in as few words as possible the nature of his errand, the object of the tiger's skin, and the name of the lady who was sitting to Gouache.

"It is strange," said Corona. "I have never heard your father speak of her."

"He has never heard of her either. He just told me so."

"I have almost enough curiosity to get into your cab and go with you."

"Do, mother." There was not much enthusiasm in the answer.

Corona looked at him, smiled, and shook her head.

"Foolish boy! Did you think I was in earnest? I should only spoil your amusement in the studio, and the lady would see that I had come to inspect her. Two good reasons—but the first is the better, dear. Go—do not keep them waiting."

"Will you not take my cab? I can get another."

"No. I am in no hurry. Good-bye."

And nodding to him with an affectionate smile, Corona passed on, leaving Orsino free at last to carry the skin to its destination.

When he entered the studio he found Madame d'Aragona absorbed in the contemplation of a piece of old tapestry which hung opposite to her, while Gouache was drawing in a tiny Hercules, high up in the right hand corner of the picture, as he had proposed. The conversation seemed to have languished, and Orsino was immediately conscious that the atmo-

sphere had changed since he had left. He unrolled the skin as he entered, and Madame d'Aragona looked at it critically. She saw that the tawny colours would become her in the portrait and her expression grew more animated.

"It is really very good of you," she said, with a grateful glance.

"I have a disappointment in store for you," answered Orsino. "My father says that Hercules wore a lion's skin. He is quite right, I remember all about it."

"Of course," said Gouache. "How could we make such a mistake!"

He dropped the bit of chalk he held and looked at Madame d'Aragona.

"What difference does it make?" asked the latter. "A lion—a tiger! I am sure they are very much alike."

"After all, it is a tiresome idea," said the painter. "You will be much better in the damask cloak. Besides, with the lion's skin you should have the club—imagine a club in your hands! And Hercules should be spinning at your feet—a man in a black coat and a high collar, with a distaff! It is an absurd idea."

"You should not call my ideas absurd and tiresome. It is not civil."

"I thought it had been mine," observed Gouache.

"Not at all. I thought of it—it was quite original."

Gouache laughed a little and looked at Orsino as though asking his opinion.

"Madame is right," said the latter. "She suggested the whole idea—by having yellow eyes."

"You see, Gouache. I told you so. The Prince takes my view. What will you do?"

"Whatever you command——"

"But I do not want to be ridiculous——"

"I do not see——"

"And yet I must have the tiger."

"I am ready."

"Doubtless,—but you must think of another subject, with a tiger in it."

"Nothing easier. Noble Roman damsel—Colosseum—tiger about to spring—rose——"

"Just heaven! What an old story! Besides, I have not the type."

"The Mysteries of Dionysus suggested Gouache. 'Thyrsus, leopard's skin——'"

"A Bacchante! Fie, monsieur—and then the leopard when we only have a tiger."

"Indian princess interviewed by a man-eater—jungle—new moon—tropical vegetation——"

"You can think of nothing but subjects for a dark type," said Madame d'Aragona impatiently.

"The fact is, in countries where the tiger walks abroad, the women are generally brunettes."

"I hate facts. You who are enthusiastic, can you not help us?" She turned to Orsino.

"Am I enthusiastic?"

"Yes, I am sure of it. Think of something."

Orsino was not pleased. He would have preferred to be thought cold and impassive.

"What can I say? The first idea was the best. Get a lion instead of a tiger—nothing is simpler."

"For my part I prefer the damask cloak and the original picture," said Gouache with decision. "All this mythology is too complicated—too Pompeian—how shall I say? Besides there is no distinct allusion. A Hercules on a bracket—anybody may have that. If you were the Marchesa di San Giacinto, for instance—oh, then everyone would laugh."

"Why? What is that?"

"She married my cousin," said Orsino. "He is an enormous giant, and they say that she has tamed him."

"Ah, no! That would not do. Something else, please."

Orsino involuntarily thought of a Sphinx as he looked at the massive brow, the yellow, sleepy eyes, and the heavy mouth. He wondered how the late Aranjuez had lived and what death he had died.

He offered the suggestion.

"It would be appropriate," replied

Madame d'Aragona. "The Sphinx in the Desert. Rome is a desert to me."

"It only depends on you——" Orsino began.

"Oh, of course! To make acquaintances, to show myself a little everywhere—it is simple enough. But it wearies me—until one is caught up in the machinery, a toothed wheel going round with the rest, one only bores one's self, and I may leave so soon. Decidedly it is not worth the trouble. Is it?"

She turned her eyes to Orsino as though asking his advice. Orsino laughed.

"How can you ask that question!" he exclaimed. "Only let the trouble be ours."

"Ah! I said you were enthusiastic." She shook her head, and rose from her seat. "It is time for me to go. We have done nothing this morning, and it is all your fault, Prince."

"I am distressed—I will not intrude upon your next sitting."

"Oh—so far as that is concerned——" She did not finish the sentence, but took up the neglected tiger's skin from the chair on which it lay.

She threw it over her shoulders, bringing the grinning head over her hair and holding the forepaws in her pointed white fingers. She came very near to Gouache and looked into his eyes her closed lips smiling.

"Admirable!" exclaimed Gouache. "It is impossible to tell where the woman ends and the tiger begins. Let me draw you like that."

"Oh no! Not for anything in the world."

She turned away quickly and dropped the skin from her shoulders.

"You will not stay a little longer? You will not let me try?" Gouache seemed disappointed.

"Impossible," she answered, putting on her hat and beginning to arrange her veil before a mirror.

Orsino watched her as she stood, her arms uplifted, in an attitude which

is almost always graceful, even for an otherwise ungraceful woman. Madame d'Aragona was perhaps a little too short, but she was justly proportioned and appeared to be rather slight, though the tight-fitting sleeves of her frock betrayed a remarkably well-turned arm. Not seeing her face, one might not have singled her out of many as a very striking woman, for she had neither the stateliness of Orsino's mother, nor the enchanting grace which distinguished Gouache's wife. But no one could look into her eyes without feeling that she was very far from being an ordinary woman.

"Quite impossible," she repeated, as she tucked in the ends of her veil and then turned upon the two men. "The next sitting! Whenever you like—to-morrow—the day after—name the time."

"When to-morrow is possible, there is no choice," said Gouache, "unless you will come again to-day."

"To-morrow, then, good-bye." She held out her hand.

"There are sketches on each of my fingers, madame—principally of tigers."

"Good-bye then—consider your hand shaken. Are you going, Prince?"

Orsino had taken his hat and was standing beside her.

"You will allow me to put you into your carriage?"

"I shall walk."

"So much the better. Good-bye, Monsieur Gouache."

"Why say *monsieur*?"

"As you like—you are older than I."

"I? Who has told you that legend? It is only a myth. When you are sixty years old, I shall still be five-and-twenty."

"And I?" inquired Madame d'Aragona, who was still young enough to laugh at age.

"As old as you were yesterday, not a day older."

"Why not say to-day?"

"Because to-day has a to-morrow—yesterday has none."



"You are delicious, my dear Gouache. Good-bye."

Madame d'Aragona went out with Orsino, and they descended the broad staircase together. Orsino was not sure whether he might not be showing too much anxiety to remain in the company of his new acquaintance, and as he realised how unpleasant it would be to sacrifice the walk with her, he endeavoured to excuse to himself his derogation from his self-imposed character of cool superiority and indifference. She was very amusing, he said to himself, and he had nothing in the world to do. He never had anything to do since his education had been completed. Why should he not walk with Madame d'Aragona and talk to her! It would be better than hanging about the club or reading a novel at home. The hounds did not meet on that day, or he would not have been at Gouache's at all. But they were to meet to-morrow, and he would therefore not see Madame d'Aragona.

"Gouache is an old friend of yours, I suppose?" observed the lady.

"He is a friend of my father's. He is almost a Roman. He married a distant connection of mine, Donna Faustina Montevarchi."

"Ah, yes—I have heard. He is a man of immense genius."

"He is a man I envy with all my heart," said Orsino.

"You envy Gouache? I should not have thought——"

"No? Ah, madame, to me a man who has a career, a profession, an interest, is a god."

"I like that," answered Madame d'Aragona. "But it seems to me you have your choice. You have the world before you. Write your name upon it. You do not lack enthusiasm. Is it the inspiration that you need?"

"Perhaps," said Orsino glancing meaningly at her as she looked at him.

"That is not new," thought she, "but he is charming, all the same. They say," she added aloud, "that genius finds inspiration everywhere."

"Alas! I am not a genius. What I ask is an occupation, and permanent interest. The thing is impossible, but I am not resigned."

"Before thirty everything is possible," said Madame d'Aragona. She knew that the mere mention of so mature an age would be flattering to such a boy.

"The objections are insurmountable," replied Orsino.

"What objections? Remember that I do not know Rome, nor the Romans."

"We are petrified in traditions. Spicca said the other day that there was but one hope for us. The Americans may yet discover Italy, as we once discovered America."

Madame d'Aragona smiled.

"Who is Spicca?" she inquired, with a lazy glance at her companion's face.

"Spicca! Surely you have heard of him. He used to be a famous duellist. He is our great wit. My father likes him very much—he is an odd character."

"There will be all the more credit in succeeding, if you have to break through a barrier of tradition and prejudice," said Madame d'Aragona, reverting rather abruptly to the first subject.

"You do not know what that means." Orsino shook his head incredulously. "You have never tried it."

"No. How could a woman be placed in such a position?"

"That is just it. You cannot understand me."

"That does not follow. Women often understand men—men they love or detest—better than men themselves."

"Do you love me, madame?" asked Orsino with a smile.

"I have just made your acquaintance," laughed Madame d'Aragona. "It is a little too soon."

"But then, according to you, if you understand me, you detest me."

"Well? If I do?" She was still laughing.

"Then I ought to disappear, I suppose."

"You do not understand women. Anything is better than indifference. When you see that you are disliked, then refuse to go away. It is the very moment to remain. Do not submit to dislike. Revenge yourself."

"I will try," said Orsino considerably amused.

"Upon me?"

"Since you advise it——"

"Have I said that I detest you?"

"More or less."

"It was only by way of illustration to my argument. I was not serious."

"You have not a serious character, I fancy," said Orsino.

"Do you dare to pass judgment on me after an hour's acquaintance?"

"Since you have judged me! You have said five times that I am enthusiastic."

"That is an exaggeration. Besides, one cannot say a true thing too often."

"How you run on, madame!"

"And you—to tell me to my face

that I am not serious. It is unheard of. Is that the way you talk to your compatriots?"

"It would not be true. But they would contradict me, as you do. They wish to be thought gay."

"Do they? I would like to know them."

"Nothing is easier. Will you allow me the honour of undertaking the matter?"

They had reached the door of Madame d'Aragona's hotel. She stood still and looked curiously at Orsino.

"Certainly not," she answered, rather coldly. "It would be asking too much of you—too much of society, and far too much of me. Thanks. Good-bye."

"May I come and see you?" asked Orsino.

He knew very well that he had gone too far, and his voice was correctly contrite.

"I dare say we shall meet somewhere," she answered, entering the hotel.

*(To be continued.)*

## HUNGRY CHILDREN.

THERE is in the Arena Chapel at Padua a fresco by Giotto which represents Charity as a tall and shapely woman. One of her hands is extended to receive a heart which is being given her from above ; with the other she holds a basket full of good things. She is not blind, like Justice. Though her heart comes direct from Heaven, and her expression is one of reverence, her eyes are her own, and she is wide awake. She stands on a heap of money-bags ; but money is no part of herself. Time has dealt hardly with the picture, and a crack now runs down its middle defacing the figure. But the money-bags are left intact.

The fate of Giotto's fresco is symbolical of the process which has taken place in the popular conception of charity. In its original sense the word denoted an unselfish regard for the good of others, and certainly did not connote material relief ; but in a commercial age we have come to disregard anything which cannot be valued by the standard of money. We are nowadays too apt to confine the use of the term to gifts of pounds, shillings, and pence, or of the food or clothing which they will buy. If we wish to speak of that quality which seeks the highest welfare of others without looking for gratitude to ourselves, or in many cases for immediately visible results in its objects, we have to make use of a many-syllabled and pedantic word. But if philanthropy is a term difficult to pronounce and rarely employed, the difficulty and rarity of the practice of the virtue which it designates are correspondingly great in an age when almsgiving has usurped the name of charity.

Of the various forms of almsgiving which have spread to a great extent in recent years, none is more popular

than the provision of meals to hungry children. The operation of the Elementary Education Acts have brought before the notice of the public the existence of much poverty which was previously latent. The children of the streets have always been sickly, but compulsory attendance at school has brought their pale faces into the light of day. A few years ago an outcry was raised against over-pressure, and it was alleged that the physical and mental powers of the children were overtaxed by the educational curriculum. It was replied that the over-pressure was only relative, and that the tasks were not too severe for healthy and well-nourished children. Then began a new cry ; and in many large towns charitable persons set themselves to provide dinners for the children attending elementary schools. In London many agencies having this object arose. Of these the most important were the Destitute Children's Dinner Society, the Board School Children's Free Dinner Fund, the (so-called) Self-supporting Penny Dinner Council, the Poor Children's Aid Society, the South London Schools Dinner Fund, and the Farm House Fund. The matter was at length taken up by the London School Board, and in November 1889 under their auspices several of the aforesaid agencies were amalgamated into the London Schools Dinner Association. At the end of July 1890 that Society had aided in the supply of over 263,000 dinners. If the movement continues to grow at this rate it is clear that it will become no inconsiderable force for good,—or evil—in the lives of the poor ; and we may well pause and consider what principles are involved in its adoption, what necessity there is for it, and whither it tends.

Before proceeding further, however,

I ought perhaps to remark that attempts have been made in many schools to provide meals on a self-supporting basis. So far as these attempts have been successful they do not fall within the range of the present article; but as a matter of fact they have, I believe, in no case, at any rate in London, quite succeeded in their object; and so far as a charitable element has been admitted into such scheme, it becomes subject to my criticism. -For the sake of simplicity however I shall refer directly only to the distribution of dinners gratuitously or at nominal prices.

There are few more pathetic sights than that of a class of children in a very poor school, set to do their tasks when their pale faces and drowsy manner suggest to the mind of the visitor the possibility that some of them have had no breakfast. And when the London School Board tells us that in London there are on any morning some 40,000 children attending elementary schools suffering from want of food, can any humane person pass the matter lightly by? It is clear that half-starved children cannot properly assimilate the instruction given them, and that in dealing with them much of the teacher's labour must be thrown away. If we pay heavy rates to support an enormous educational machine, "why spoil the ship to save a ha'porth of tar?" We are logically bound, so say our educational enthusiasts, to see that the finishing touch required to perfect the machine is not omitted. For once the plain man is inclined to be on the side of the enthusiast. For though, being an Englishman and not a Frenchman, he is not distressed by logical inconsistencies, the alleviation of hunger will always appeal to his sympathy. And can a gift which helps forward the cause of education do any harm either to the recipient or to the community?

This is the obvious side of the question. There is however a school of persons, to which the Charity Organisation Society belongs, who regard it

from another point of view. This school holds that it is unwise in charitable matters to attempt to deal with children apart from the families to which they belong. The family and not the individual is the unit of civilised life. You cannot as a rule benefit the individual unless you benefit the family, and you cannot injure the family without in some degree harming all the members of it. No doubt there is much poverty apparent at our elementary schools, but this must be so long as poverty exists at all. It has decreased, and will continue to decrease with the general improvement in the conditions under which the poor live. Meanwhile any circumstance which retards that improvement will injure the children equally with the parents. The regular provision of charitable meals to the poorest children will in fact operate as a regular allowance to the parents,—an allowance proportioned in quantity to the number of children. Such an allowance will, it is contended, work prejudicially in at least two distinct ways. It will tend to depreciate the wages of unskilled work; and, worse than this, it will offer a direct encouragement to early marriages, will lessen the incentive of parents to self-reliance and providence, and will sap their sense of responsibility in its most important relation, that of family life.<sup>1</sup>

Are these objections real, or are they the mere pedantry of deduction? This is the question which we have to answer. It may be conceded at once

<sup>1</sup> It may, by way of a *reductio ad absurdum*, be asked, Would not this contention, if sound, condemn free, or even assisted education—a measure which has been generally approved by public opinion? Extremists would of course say that this is so. There is, however, a great distinction between the free provision of education and of the material necessities of life. In the case of education the need is not instinctively felt, and the demand for it is stimulated by the supply. In the case of material necessities their want serves as the most potent motive for work, and their gratuitous provision must in some degree operate to weaken that motive.

that the experiments, so long as they are carried out only on a small scale, cannot do any great harm ; but the advocates of the system make no secret of their desire to extend it as widely as possible, and we can consider it fairly only by imagining it in operation generally throughout our poorer schools.

We need not go back to the history of the old Poor Law in order to find illustrations of the truth that an allowance in supplementation of wages tends to depress them. There is practically an unlimited quantity of unskilled labour in London, and the wages of the lowest kind of work is determined by the cost of living the cheapest life which the worker regards as more tolerable than that of the workhouse. It is clear that any charitable allowance enables the recipient to sell his labour at a lower price than he could without its help. It is an interesting fact that when the out-relief which was freely given to widows in Whitechapel was withdrawn a few years ago, the wages of charwomen rose in that locality. There is an instance which occurred within my own knowledge, which shows that the operation of the principle may be observed even in the history of a single individual. A lad, whose family had been helped by a charitable society, was placed in a home where he lived rent free, going daily to his work as an errand-boy. He gave satisfaction to his employer and remained in the situation for a considerable period. His wages however were not raised as was expected. After the lapse of much time the employer was approached on the subject ; he gave as the reason for his treatment of the boy, the fact that as the lad had no rent to pay he could afford to live on his original wages. This illustration may appear trivial, but when we reflect that such cases could be multiplied indefinitely, we cannot deny the danger of meddling with such a delicate machine as that by which wages are regulated. It may be noted

that in one district where the promotion of dinners was suggested, the strongest exception was taken to it on that ground by working men themselves.

Let us now turn to the question of the results which the free feeding of children is likely to produce upon character. The practice, if generally adopted in our poor schools would, as we have already remarked, be in effect to give a regular charitable allowance to the poor proportionate in amount to the number of their children. This is in fact what was done in the early decades of this century by the administrators of our old Poor Law. The allowance was then provided by the rates, but so far as the recipients were concerned the principle was the same. What was the result ? No one who has carefully studied the Report of the Poor Law Commission of 1834 (on which our present Poor Law is founded) can doubt that the result of the system was the wholesale demoralisation of the poorest class. Parents came to regard the parish and not themselves as primarily responsible for the care of their children. They married without any prospect of being able to support a family : they went on to look to the parish for work as well as money ; and in this way self-reliance became gradually undermined. At length the evil was so patent that drastic legislation was seen to be necessary in order to meet it, and in the end the whole allowance system was swept away. Nowadays charity is constantly attempting to re-introduce the practices which were discarded by the Poor Law as deleterious to the true interests of the poor. I believe that the school-feeding movement is one such attempt. A bowl of milk offered to a starving cat will rapidly create a crowd of starving cats ; and if free dinners are offered at school to hungry children, the number of hungry children increases instead of diminishing. It is a significant fact that, in some schools where the experiment has been tried, the



managers have found it necessary to bring it to a speedy termination on account of the constant growth of the number of applications for a place on the list of beneficiaries. Too often the application does not stop at the request for food. Clothes also are demanded; and one society which began by providing dinners, is now appealing to the public for help to provide clothes regularly to children at school. In charitable matters a supply creates a demand, and the children of vicious, idle, and improvident parents will in the main always want. Science tells us that the poor must seek their well-being in learning to conform to the natural laws and conditions under which they live. It is a law of nature that children must suffer for their parents' vices and follies. Charity may relieve individuals from the operation of this law, but cannot repeal it; and by obscuring the certainty of its operation, may only intensify the evil which it seeks to remove.

But, it may be asked, does not this line of argument strike at the root of all charity? Are the families of the vicious, the idle, and the improvident to be left to suffer, in order that the community may realise the consequences of vice and folly, and future generations be the wiser and better for the lesson? Our best instincts are all opposed to this doctrine of *laissez faire*. Charity is the most divine of human qualities. The pessimist may well exclaim—

Are God and Nature then at strife,  
That Nature lends such evil dreams?  
So careful of the type she seems,  
So careless of the single life.

It is because the Christian and the political economist alike too often answer this question in the affirmative that they are frequently found in opposition to each other. A discussion of religious questions would be out of place in this article, but I may perhaps be allowed to offer a suggestion to those who think that the teaching

of Christ inculcates the indiscriminate relief of immediate distress. Is it an irreverent view of revelation that inspiration has given us no truths which we are capable of discovering for ourselves? And if this view be correct, may we not be content to see in such commands as "Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn thou not away," merely an inculcation of the charitable spirit which leaves us free to withhold our hand—painful as it may be to us to do so—in cases where experience shows us that our interference would in the long run produce more misery than it removes? Was not Giotto right when he painted Charity as receiving her heart alone direct from Heaven?

I have attempted in the preceding paragraphs to do something towards clearing the mist in which the discussion of charitable questions is generally involved. Let me now return to the consideration of the concrete question of school-dinners in the light of actual experience.

Three questions naturally suggest themselves. (1.) Is the distress which the scheme is intended to meet so great as is represented? (2.) Do the dinners afford any remedy for it? (3.) Is it possible in the administration of the dinners to minimise the evils which would result from their indiscriminate distribution?

Some very useful evidence bearing on these questions has been collected by a special committee of the Charity Organisation Society, which was appointed in December 1889 to consider the best means of dealing with school children alleged to be in want of food. This committee selected five poor schools in different parts of London, in which dinners were being given on the system advocated by the London School Dinners Association. Having obtained the lists of the recipients of the charity they made careful inquiry into the conditions under which they were living. The number of cases examined was necessarily small, but

they were drawn from widely different neighbourhoods, and there is no reason to think that they were exceptional. The results of this investigation are very instructive. Those school-managers, who know the haphazard way in which the large figures said to represent the number of starving children in London were compiled, will not be surprised to hear that of a hundred and one families whose children were receiving free dinners, forty-nine were found not to require material assistance at all. We must not forget that these cases were all selected on account of their apparently exceptional poverty. It is true, however, that the number of half-starved children may have been greatly exaggerated, and yet that there may be many thousands in great want. This brings us to our second question. On this head the answer of our investigators is very definite. In some five or six cases only, they assert, out of the total of a hundred and one, could the temporary supply of meals to the children be regarded as an adequate remedy. Here is a typical example:—

Father, a builder's labourer, earning, when in work, 20s. to 27s. a week. Mother getting 6s. a week by washing. She is not a good manager, and the house is untidy. Both out of work at the time of inquiry, everything pawned, 10s. 6d. due for rent, and family subsisting on landlady's charity. The eldest girl, who had chest delicacy, was receiving *one halfpenny meal a week!*

In another case, in which a boy was receiving dinners, it was ascertained that the family was in distress through the father's illness. The latter, a copperworker, had suffered for three weeks from chest disease; the wife earned a few shillings by odd jobs; there were four children, of whom the eldest earned six shillings a week as errand-boy; the rent was four shillings a week. What in such a case as this was the use of giving a few dinners to one child? As a result of the inquiry which proved that the family were most respectable, the case was taken in hand by the local Charity Organisation Committee.

The man was provided with liberal diet and the best hospital and convalescent treatment; and an excellent mangle with a good connection was obtained for the wife, by which they would earn over twelve shillings a week with a prospect of increase. The cost of this case was some £20, but a family was saved from pauperism.

The case is a good illustration of the better methods of charity. Political economy can raise no objection to charitable interference where its effect is to lift a family into a position of self-dependence. First ascertain that temporary assistance is likely to produce permanent benefit, and then spare no time or trouble in your efforts to make that assistance as thorough as possible. It is this personal element which distinguishes true charity from mere almsgiving. Friendly influence, which, instead of saving a man trouble, encourages him to greater efforts, is not a pauperising force. It is, as a rule, only when a family is in need of material assistance, that a stranger has the opportunity of extending a helping hand, but the cause of distress is generally either ignorance or some defect of character, and no remedy is worthy of the name which does not attack the evil at its root. To cut the stalk merely increases the vigour of its growth in the future. Money is an instrument which charity employs; but the mere gift of money is in most cases not charity at all, but poison.

Let us now consider what answer our cases yield to the third question. The provision of meals to children, it may be argued, is not a panacea, but it is useful so far as it goes. If we entrust the selection of the recipients to the teachers and managers, can we not ensure that those only who are in need are helped? To this we can only reply that these safeguards have proved insufficient in the past. The teachers as a rule have no time, and the managers no inclination to make themselves acquainted with the circumstances of the children in their homes. As I have already stated, inquiry has shown

that these excellent persons may be mistaken as to the need of material assistance in forty-nine out of a hundred and one cases. The cause of the mistake is generally the appearance of the child. Unwholesome surroundings, or some temporary ailment, is as often the cause of paleness as is want of food. In other instances the delicacy is constitutional. In one of the examined cases a child who was thought to be underfed was really sickening for the whooping-cough, and when subsequently visited was rosy and fat. A more striking case was that of a boy who was thought to be underfed because he was naturally delicate, and was recommended for the dinners. The family proved to be in comparatively prosperous circumstances. They were just repaying the last instalment of a loan of £7; and a younger child was at the same time being treated for full-bloodedness consequent upon over-feeding.

Here again is another way in which children find their way on to the dinner-list. Tommy played truant one day and spent his school-fee. Asked next day for an explanation of his absence, he said that his mother had not got the money to give him. She was a widow with three children. At once the fees were remitted for thirteen weeks. The remission was accepted as unmistakable proof of poverty by the dinner-givers and the boy was put on the free list. It was discovered that the mother, in addition to her earnings of ten shillings a week, was receiving from her late husband's employers an allowance of half-a-crown a week for each child.

Dirt has before now been considered sufficient evidence of poverty to entitle a child to free meals. In a case which came to my notice this test was applied with unjust but ludicrous results. While a widow, with two boys, was washing one of them the other escaped into the street. On their appearance at school the latter was promptly awarded a dinner, but the former on account of his "shining morning face"

was decided not to be in need of it. The instances on which I have dwelt may seem trivial, but it is of a series of such trivial events that the lives of the poor are composed, by a series of such trivial influences that their characters are made or marred. The evidence at our disposal is, I think, sufficient to convince an impartial student that the beneficial results of the wholesale provision of charitable meals are extremely small, while we cannot doubt that it tends to initiate both the children and the parents into the practice of *cadging*.

A reply may of course be made by the advocates of the dinner-system. Whatever pauperising tendency the distribution might have in itself, is, so it is argued, more than counter-balanced by the effect of the improvement in education which it brings about. But do facts bear out this assertion? Is it an acquaintance with the three R's, or is it home influence, which forms the character of the child? Follow up the careers of those who have received doles in their youth, and you will find them again and again seeking charitable help in after years. Moreover I greatly doubt whether there are many cases in which the dinners do facilitate education. Many children who appear to be in want of food are not so in fact. Most of those who are really half-starved are the offspring of drunkards, and I have a strong suspicion that parents of this class often allow for any charitable assistance given at school, and deduct a proportionate quantity from the meals supplied at home. In a word, if the number of cases in which the cause of education is promoted by the dinners be small, the demoralization which they produce is widespread.

The alternative course suggested is careful investigation of the circumstances of the whole family, followed by adequate assistance wherever those circumstances can be really improved. This method calls for the expenditure of much personal effort, and often of

no small amount of money. But it is better to deal with a few cases thoroughly than to play with a large number.

If my observations are correct the opposition between the interest of the individual and that of the community, which at first sight seems so often to baffle us in the administration of charity, will in most cases disappear. To put my conclusion shortly, the promiscuous and aimless almsgiving which attracts and manufactures cadgers, does not really benefit the individual recipient, while the careful and considered charity which raises a family to independence does no injury to the community, because it offers no encouragement to indolence and improvidence.

There are however cases in which the greatest difficulty arises. I have pointed out that any interference with parental responsibility is wrong in principle. It tends to weaken family ties and is injurious to society at large. Any attempt therefore to deal with a child apart from its parents is fraught with danger. We have seen that, so long as the child is living at home, such attempts are not, as a rule, likely to attain even their immediate object. Moreover the difficulty of ascertaining the real means of parents, at any rate in large towns, is great. In cases where the parish has to assist a widow with several children, the consensus of enlightened opinion is for this reason entirely in favour of the principle of taking some of the children into the parish schools, instead of making a regular allowance to the mother. But this course again is attended with some very serious disadvantages. It is probable that even unsatisfactory home influences are better for a child than their entire absence. Boys and girls brought up in institutions, however well managed, are apt to have one side of their nature stunted. They may learn to be honest, thrifty, and well-mannered; but the affections and domestic virtues, which even bad

homes and disreputable parents will inspire, are too often undeveloped. Yet even inside an institution the instinct for family relations will strive to find an outlet. Could anything be more pathetic than the following anecdote which comes from the matron of a Poor Law school? Some years ago a baby was found deserted in, let us say, Berwick Street. Her parentage was never traced, and she was in due course sent by the guardians to their district school. For want of another name she was called after the place of her discovery, Ada Berwick. By a strange coincidence another baby was found a few years later in the same street, and taken to the same institution, where she naturally received the same surname. What was not Ada's delight when the two children met! The newcomer bore her name, and must therefore, she maintained, be her sister. She adopted her forthwith, watching over and befriending her in every possible way.

Charitable persons therefore, if they are interested in the real welfare of a family, will strain every nerve to put the parents into a position of self-dependence before they break up the family. There are, however, extreme cases in which children are exposed to such physical hardship or moral danger that their interest clearly demands their complete removal from their surroundings. The parents may or may not be able to maintain them properly. In the former alternative we are once more met with the old difficulty. By taking the care of the family off the parents' hands we shall be offering a premium to the neglect of children by selfish or vicious parents. How is this difficulty to be coped with?

The Industrial Schools Acts are intended to provide a means of dealing with these cases. Any child who is found begging, or left out in the streets at night, or living in an immoral home, may be brought before a magistrate and committed by him to an Industrial Home. An order is made at the same time for a weekly contribution by the

parent towards the cost of the child's maintenance. It is true that as a matter of fact only about five per cent. of this cost is on the average collected from the parents, and magistrates sometimes refuse on this ground to exercise their jurisdiction ; but if the parents escape the greater part of the expense they are at any rate put to such trouble in avoiding the payment, —which is collected by the police— that few persons would willingly submit to have such an order made against them. One fact at least is certain, as compared with those large private institutions, like Dr. Barnardo's, in the administration of which parental responsibility is entirely ignored, the certified industrial school system minimises the demoralising tendency of charitable interference with family duties.

Here then is scope for the exercise of much benevolent energy. But the opportunity is only for those who are in earnest. When a ragged urchin begs of you in the street it is easy to give him a penny, and it is not difficult to send tickets for soup and coal to his parents. You are rewarded for your action, if not by seeing any permanent results, at any rate by copious expressions of gratitude. If on the other hand you give the ragamuffin in charge, his howls collect a crowd who upbraid you for your cruelty, and you get no thanks for the trouble and loss of time occasioned by your attendance at the police court. But you have the satisfaction of knowing that you have been the means of diverting one life from a certainty of wretchedness to a fair possibility of honest labour.

The Industrial Schools Acts, it will be noticed, are applicable only to the grossest cases of ill-treatment or neglect ; and in view of the difficulty of working them satisfactorily, opinion will be divided as to the desirability of their further extension. Meanwhile we have in a statute passed two years ago, and known by the awkward title of the Prevention of Cruelty to, and Protection of, Children Act, 1889, a further legislative attempt to visit the sins of the fathers upon themselves to the advantage of the children. But this Act catches only parents who are guilty of wilful ill-treatment or neglect ; and "wilful" misconduct, in a legal sense, is not easy to prove. Neglect resulting from mere selfishness and carelessness cannot be punished. The question whether in any particular case of this nature charity should step in or not is always a difficult one. No general rule can be formulated. The circumstances of each case must be considered on their merits. And in forming our judgment we must not forget that, if we are endowed with the average amount of sympathy, we are strongly biassed in the direction of helping the individual sufferer even though in doing so we may be violating principle. The plain man is apt to think more of immediate results which he himself can witness, than of the remote effect of his actions which may not be felt by the present generation. Let him recognise the truth, in a new sense, of the words—

The evil that men do lives after them,  
The good is oft interred with their bones.

H. CLARENCE BOURNE.



## ANDREW MARVELL.

Few poets are of sufficiently tough and impenetrable fibre as to be able with impunity to mix with public affairs. Even though the spring of their inspiration be like the fountain in the garden of grace "drawn from the brain of the purple mountain that stands in the distance yonder," that stream is apt to become sullied at the very source by the envious contact of the world. Poets conscious of their vocation have generally striven sedulously, by sequestering their lives somewhat austere from the current of affairs, to cultivate the tranquillity and freshness on which the purity of their utterance depends. If it be hard to hear sermons and remain a Christian, it is harder to mix much with men and remain an idealist. And if this be true of commerce in its various forms, law, medicine, and even education, it seems to be still more fatally true of politics. Of course the temptation of politics to a philosophical mind is very great. To be at the centre of the machine; to be able perhaps to translate a high thought into a practical measure; to be able to make some closer reconciliation between law and morality, as the vertical sun draws the shadow nearer to the feet,—all this to a generous mind has an attraction almost supreme.

And yet the strain is so great that few survive it. David,—the inspired bandit, as M. Renan with such fatal infelicity calls him—was law-giver, general, king, and poet in one. Sophocles was more than once elected general, and is reported to have kept his colleagues in good humour by the charm of his conversation through a short but disagreeable campaign. Dante was an ardent and uncompromising revolutionary. Goethe was a kind of statesman. Among our own

poets Spenser might perhaps be quoted as a fairly successful compromise; but of poets of the first rank Milton is the only one who deliberately took a considerable and active part in public life.

It is perhaps to Milton's example, and probably to his advice, that we owe the loss of a great English poet. It seems to have been if not at Milton's instigation, at any rate by his direct aid that Andrew Marvell was introduced to public life. The acquaintance began at Rome; but Marvell was introduced into Milton's intimate society, as his assistant secretary, at a most impressionable age. He had written poetry, dealing like *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* mainly with country subjects, and was inclined no doubt to hang on the words of the older poet as on an oracle of light and truth. We can imagine him piecing out his aspirations and day-dreams, while the poet of sterner stuff, yet of all men least insensible to the delights of congenial society, points out to him the more excellent way, bidding him to abjure Amaryllis for a time. He has style, despatches will give it precision; knowledge of men and life will confirm and mature his mind; the true poet must win a stubborn virility if he is to gain the world. The younger and more delicate mind complies; and we lose a great poet, Milton gains an assistant secretary, and the age a somewhat gross satirist.

At a time like this, when with a sense of sadness we can point to more than one indifferent politician who might have been a capable writer, and so very many indifferent writers who could well have been spared to swell the ranks of politicians, we may well take the lesson of Andrew Marvell to heart.

The passion for the country which breathes through the earlier poems, the free air which ruffles the page, the summer languors, the formal garden seen through the casements of the cool house, the close scrutiny of woodland sounds, such as the harsh laughter of the woodpecker, the shrill insistence of the grasshopper's dry note, the luscious content of the drowsy, croaking frogs, the musical sweep of the scythe through the falling swathe; all these are the work of no town-bred scholar like Milton, whose country poems are rather visions seen through the eyes of other poets, or written as a man might transcribe the vague and inaccurate emotions of a landscape drawn by some old uncertain hand and dimmed by smoke and time. Of course Milton's *Il Penseroso* and *L'Allegro* have far more value even as country poems than hundreds of more literal transcripts. From a literary point of view indeed the juxtapositions of half-a-dozen epithets alone would prove the genius of the writer. But there are no sharp outlines; the scholar pauses in his walk to peer across the watered flat, or raises his eyes from his book to see the quiver of leaves upon the sunlit wall; he notes an effect it may be; but they do not come like treasures lavished from a secret storehouse of memory.

With Andrew Marvell it is different, though we will show by instances that his observation was sometimes at fault. Where or when this passion came to him we cannot tell; whether in the great walled garden at the back of the old school-house at Hull, where his boyish years were spent; at Cambridge, where the oozy streams lapped and green fens crawled almost into the heart of the town, where snipe were shot and wild-duck snared on the site of some of its now populous streets; at Meldreth perhaps, where doubtless some antique kindred lingered at the old manor-house that still bears his patronymic, "the Marvells." Wherever it was,—and such tastes are

rarely formed in later years—the delicate observation of the minute philosopher side by side with the art of intimate expression grew and bloomed.

We see a trace of that leaning nature, the trailing dependence of the uneasy will of which we have already spoken, in a story of his early years. The keen-eyed boy, with his fresh colour and waving brown hair, was thrown on the tumultuous world of Cambridge, it seems, before he was thirteen years of age; a strange medley no doubt,—its rough publicity alone saving it, as with a dash of healthy freshness, from the effeminacy and sentimentalism apt to breed in more sheltered societies. The details of the story vary; but the boy certainly fell into the hands of Jesuits, who finally induced him to abscond to one of their retreats in London, where, over a bookseller's shop, after a long and weary search, his father found him and persuaded him to return. Laborious Dr. Grosart has extracted from the Hull Records a most curious letter relating to this incident, asking for advice from Andrew Marvell's father by a man whose son has been inveigled away in similar circumstances.

Such an escapade belongs to a mind that must have been ardent and daring beyond its fellows; but it also shows a somewhat shifting foundation, an imagination easily dazzled and a pliability of will that cost us, we may believe, a poet. After Cambridge came some years of travel, which afforded material for some of his poems, such as the satire on Holland, of which the cleverness is still apparent, though its elaborate coarseness and pedantic humour make it poor pasture to feed the mind upon.

But the period to which we owe almost all the true gold among his poems, is the two years which he spent at Nunappleton House, 1650–1652, as tutor to the daughter of the great Lord Fairfax, the little Lady Mary Fairfax, then twelve years old. Marvell was at this time twenty-nine; and that exquisite relation which may

exist between a grown man, pure in heart, and a young girl, when disparity of fortune and circumstance forbids all thought of marriage, seems to have been the mainspring of his song. Such a relation is half tenderness which dissembles its passion, and half worship which laughs itself away in easy phrases. The lyric *Young Love*, which indubitably though not confessedly refers to Mary Fairfax, is one of the sweetest poems of pure feeling in the language.

Common beauties stay fifteen;  
Such as yours should swifter move,  
Whose fair blossoms are too green  
Yet for lust, but not for love.

Love as much the snowy lamb,  
Or the wanton kid, doth prize  
As the lusty bull or ram,  
For his morning sacrifice.

Now then love me ; Time may take  
Thee before thy time away ;  
Of this need we'll virtue make,  
And learn love before we may.

It is delightful in this connection to think of the signet-ring with the device of a fawn, which he used in early life and may still be seen on his papers, as a gift of his little pupil, earned doubtless by his poem on the *Dying Fawn*, which is certainly an episode of Lady Mary's childhood.

In the group of early poems, which are worth all the rest of Marvell's work put together, several strains predominate. In the first place there is a close observation of Nature, even a grotesque transcription, with which we are too often accustomed only to credit later writers. For instance, in *Damon the Mower* he writes :

The grasshopper its pipe gives o'er,  
And hamstringed frogs can dance no more ;  
But in the brook the green frog wades,  
And grasshoppers seek out the shades.

The second line of this we take to refer to the condition to which frogs are sometimes reduced in a season of extreme drought, when the pools are dry. Marvell must have seen a frog with his thighs drawn and con-

tracted from lack of moisture making his way slowly through the grass in search of a refreshing swamp ; this is certainly minute observation, as the phenomenon is a rare one. Again, such a delicate couplet as,

And through the hazels thick espy  
The hatching throstle's shining eye,

is not the work of a scholar who walks a country road, but of a man who will push his way into the copses in early spring, and has watched with delight the timorous eye and the upturned beak of the thrush sunk in her nest. Or again, speaking of the dwindled summer stream running so perilously clear after weeks of drought that the fish are languid :

The stupid fishes hang, as plain  
As flies in crystal overta'en.

Or of the hayfield roughly mown,  
into which the herd has been turned  
to graze :

And what below the scythe increast,  
Is pinched yet nearer by the beast.

The mower's work begun and ended  
with the dews, in all its charming  
monotony, seems to have had a peculiar attraction for Marvell ; he recurs to it in more than one poem.

I am the mower Damon, known  
Through all the meadows I have mown ;  
On me the morn her dew distils  
Before her darling daffodils.

And again, of the mowers,

Who seem like Israelites to be  
Walking on foot through a green sea,  
To them the grassy deeps divide  
And crowd a lane to either side.

The aspects of the country on which he dwells with deepest pleasure—and here lies the charm—are not those of Nature in her sublimer or more elated moods, but the gentler and more pastoral elements, that are apt to pass unnoticed at the time by all but the true lovers of the quiet country side, and crowd in upon the mind when surfeited by the wilder glories of

peak and precipice, or where tropical luxuriance side by side with tropical aridity blinds and depresses the sense, with the feeling that made Browning cry from Florence,

Oh, to be in England, now that April's there !

Marvell's lines, *On the Hill and Grove at Billborow*, are an instance of this ; there is a certain fantastic craving after antithesis and strangeness, it is true, but the spirit underlies the lines. The poem however must be read in its entirety to gain the exact impression.

Again, for simple felicity, what could be more airily drawn than the following from *The Garden* ?—

Here at the fountain's sliding foot,  
Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,  
Casting the body's vest aside,  
My soul into the boughs doth glide,  
There like a bird it sits and sings,  
Then whets and claps its silver wings.

Or this, from the Song to celebrate the marriage of Lord Fauconberg and the Lady Mary Cromwell, of the undisturbed dead of night ?—

The astrologer's own eyes are set  
And even wolves the sheep forget ;  
Only this shepherd late and soon  
Upon this hill outwakes the moon.  
Hark ! how he sings with sad delight  
Through the clear and silent night.

Other poems such as the *Ode on the Drop of Dew* and the *Nymph Complaining for the Death of her Fawn*, too long to quote, are penetrated with the same essence.

At the same time it must be confessed that his imagery is sometimes at fault,—it would be strange if it were not so ; he falls now and then, the wonder is how rarely, to a mere literary conceit. Thus the mower Damon sees himself reflected in his scythe ; the fawn feeds on roses till its lip “seems to bleed,” not with a possibly lurking thorn, but with the hue of its pasturage. With Hobbinol and Tomalin for the names of swain and nymph unreality is apt to grow.

When the garden is compared to a fortress and its scents to a salvo of artillery,—

Well shot, ye firemen ! O how sweet  
And round your equal fires do meet,—

and,

Then in some flower's beloved hut  
Each bee as sentinel is shut,  
And sleeps so too,—but if once stirred,  
She runs you through, nor asks the word,—

here we are in the region of false tradition and mere literary hearsay. The poem of *Eyes and Tears*, again (so strangely admired by Archbishop Trench), is little more than a string of conceits ; and when in *Mourning* we hear that

She courts herself in amorous rain,  
Herself both Danae and the shower ;

when we are introduced to Indian divers who plunge in the tears and can find no bottom, we think of Macaulay's *Tears of Sensibility*, and Crashaw's fearful lines on the Magdalene's tears,—

Two walking baths, two weeping motions,  
Portable and compendious oceans.

At the same time Marvell's poems are singularly free as a rule from this strain of affectation. He has none of the morbidity that often passes for refinement. The free air, the wood-paths, the full heat of the summer sun,—this is his scenery ; we are not brought into contact with the bones beneath the rose-bush, the splintered sun-dial, and the stagnant pool. His pulses throb with ardent life and have none of the “inexplicable faintness” of a deathlier school. What would not Crashaw have had to say of the *Nuns of Appleton* if he had been so unfortunate as to have lighted on them ? But Marvell writes :

Our orient breaths perfumed are  
With incense of incessant prayer,  
And holy water of our tears  
Most strangely our complexion clears,  
Not tears of Grief, but such as those  
With which calm Pleasure overflows.

And passing by a sweet and natural transition to his little pupil, the young Recluse of Nunappleton,—

I see the angels in a crown  
On you the lilies showering down,  
And round about you glory breaks  
That something more than human speaks.

The poems contain within themselves the germ of the later growth of satire in the shape of caustic touches of humour, as well as a certain austere philosophy that is apt to peer behind the superficial veil of circumstance, yet without dreary introspection. There is a Dialogue between Soul and Body which deals with the duality of human nature which has been the despair of all philosophers and the painful axiom of all religious teachers. Marvell makes the Soul say :

Constrained not only to endure  
Diseases, but what's worse, the cure,  
And ready oft the port to gain,  
Am shipwrecked into health again.

In the same connection in *The Coronet*, an allegory of the Ideal and the Real, he says :

Alas ! I find the serpent old,  
Twining in his speckled breast  
About the flowers disguised doth fold,  
With wreaths of fame and interest.

Much of his philosophy however has not the same vitality, born of personal struggle and discomfiture, but is a mere echo of stoical and pagan views of life and its vanities drawn from Horace and Seneca, who seem to have been favourite authors. Such a sentiment as the following, from *Appleton House*—

But he superfluously spread,  
Demands more room alive than dead ;  
What need of all this marble crust,  
To impart the wanton mole of dust ?—

and from *The Coy Mistress*,—

The grave's a fine and private place,  
But none, methinks, do there embrace—  
are mere pagan commonplaces, however daintily expressed.

But there is a poem, an idyll in the

form of a dialogue between Clorinda and Damon, which seems to contain a distinct philosophical motive. Idylls in the strict sense of the word are not remarkable for having a moral ; or if they have one it may be said that it is generally bad, and is apt to defend the enjoyment of an hour against the conscience of centuries ; but in *Clorinda and Damon*, the woman is the tempter and Damon is obdurate. She invites him to her cave, and describes its pleasures.

CLO. A fountain's liquid bell  
Tinkles within the concave shell.  
DA. Might a soul bathe there and be  
clean,  
Or slake its drought ?  
CLO. What is't you mean ?  
DA. Clorinda, pastures, caves, and  
springs,  
These once had been enticing things.  
CLO. And what late change ?  
DA. The other day  
Pan met me.  
CLO. What did great Pan say ?  
DA. Words that transcend poor shepherds  
skill.

This poem seems to us a distinct attempt to make of the sickly furniture of the idyll a vehicle for the teaching of religious truth. Is it fanciful to read in it a poetical rendering of the doctrine of conversion, the change that may come to a careless and sensuous nature by being suddenly brought face to face with the Divine light ? It might even refer to some religious experience of Marvell's own : Milton's "mighty Pan," typifying the Redeemer, is in all probability the original.

The work then on which Marvell's fame chiefly subsists,—with the exception of one poem which belongs to a different class, and will be discussed later, the Horatian Ode—may be said to belong to the regions of nature and feeling and to have anticipated in a remarkable degree the minute observation of natural phenomena characteristic of a modern school, even to a certain straining after unusual, almost bizarre effects. The writers of that date, indeed, as Green points out, seem



to have become suddenly and unaccountably modern, a fact which we are apt to overlook owing to the frigid reaction of the school of Pope. Whatever the faults of Marvell's poems may be, and they are patent to all, they have a strain of originality. He does not seem to imitate, he does not even follow the lines of other poets; never,—except in a scattered instance or two, where there is a faint echo of Milton,—does he recall or suggest that he has a master. At the same time the poems are so short and slight that any criticism upon them is apt to take the form of a wish that the same hand had written more, and grown old in his art. There is a monotony for instance about their subjects, like the song of a bird recurring again and again to the same phrase; there is an uncertainty, an incompleteness not so much of expression as of arrangement, a tendency to diverge and digress in an unconcerned and vagabond fashion. There are stanzas, even long passages, which a lover of proportion such as Gray (who excised one of the most beautiful stanzas of the *Elegy* because it made too long a parenthesis) would never have spared. It is the work of a young man trying his wings, and though perhaps not flying quite so directly and professionally to his end, revelling in the new-found powers with a delicious ecstasy which excuses what is vague and prolix; especially when over all is shed that subtle precious quality which makes a sketch from one hand so unutterably more interesting than a finished picture from another,—which will arrest with a few commonplace phrases, lightly touched by certain players, the attention which has wandered throughout a whole sonata. The strength of his style lies in its unexpectedness. You are arrested by what has been well called a "predestined" epithet, not a mere otiose addition, but a word which turns a noun into a picture; the "hook-shouldered" hill "to abrupter greatness thrust," "the sugar's uncorrupting oil," "the vigilant patrol of

stars," "the squatted thorns," "the oranges" like golden lamps in a green night," "the garden's fragrant innocence,"—these are but a few random instances of a tendency that meets you in every poem. Marvell had in fact the qualities of a consummate artist, and only needed to repress his luxuriance and to confine his expansiveness. In his own words,

Height with a certain grace doth bend,  
But low things clownishly ascend.

Before we pass on to discuss the satires we may be allowed to say a few words on a class of poems largely represented in Marvell's works, which may be generally called Panegyric.

Quite alone among these,—indeed, it can be classed with no other poem in the language—stands the Horatian Ode on Cromwell's return from Ireland. Mr. Lowell said of it that as a testimony to Cromwell's character it was worth more than all Carlyle's biographies; he might without exaggeration have said the same of its literary qualities. It has force with grace, originality with charm, in every stanza. Perhaps almost the first quality that would strike a reader of it for the first time is its quaintness; but further study creates no reaction against this in the mind,—the usual sequel to poems which depend on quaintness for effect. But when Mr. Lowell goes on to say that the poem shows the difference between grief that thinks of its object and grief that thinks of its rhymes (referring to Dryden), he is not so happy. The pre-eminent quality of the poem is its art; and its singular charm is the fact that it succeeds, in spite of being artificial, in moving and touching the springs of feeling in an extraordinary degree. It is a unique piece in the collection, the one instance where Marvell's undoubted genius burned steadily through a whole poem. Here he flies *penna metuente solvi*. It is in completeness more than in quality that it is superior to all his other work, but in quality too it has that lurking

divinity that cannot be analysed or imitated.

'Tis madness to resist or blame  
The force of angry heaven's flame,  
And if we would speak true,  
Much to the man is due  
Who from his private gardens, where  
He lived reserved and austere,  
(As though his highest plot  
To plant the bergamot,)  
Could by industrious valour climb  
To ruin the great work of Time,  
And cast the kingdoms old  
Into another mould.

This is the apotheosis of tyrants ; it is the bloom of republicanism just flowering into despotism. But the Ode is no party utterance ; the often quoted lines on the death of Charles, in their grave yet passionate dignity, might have been written by the most ardent of Royalists, and have often done service on their side. But indeed the whole Ode is above party, and looks clearly into the heart and motives of man. It moves from end to end with the solemn beat of its singular metre, its majestic cadences, without self-consciousness or sentiment, austere but not frigid. His other panegyrics are but little known, though the awkward and ugly lines on Milton have passed into anthologies, owing to their magnificent exordium, "When I beheld the poet blind, yet old." But no one can pretend that such lines as these are anything but prosaic and ridiculous to the last degree—

Thou hast not missed one thought that  
could be fit,  
And all that was improper dost omit; . . .  
At once delight and horror on us seize,  
Thou sing'st with so much gravity and  
ease—

though the unfortunate alteration in the meaning of the word *improper* makes them even more ridiculous than they are. The poems on the *First Anniversary of the Government of the Lord Protector*, on the *Death of the Lord Protector*, and on *Richard Cromwell* are melancholy reading though they have some sonorous lines.

And as the angel of our Commonweal  
Troubling the waters, yearly mak'st them  
heal,

may pass as an epigram. But that a man of penetrating judgment and independence of opinion should descend to a vein of odious genealogical compliment, and speak of the succeeding of

Rainbow to storm, Richard to Oliver,  
and add that

A Cromwell in an hour a prince will grow,

by way of apology for the obvious deficiencies of his new Protector, makes us very melancholy indeed. Flattery is of course a slough in which many poets have wallowed ; and a little grovelling was held to be even more commendable in poets in that earlier age ; but we see the pinion beginning to droop, and the bright eye growing sickly and dull. Milton's poisonous advice is already at work.

But we must pass through a more humiliating epoch still. The poet of spicy gardens and sequestered fields seen through the haze of dawn is gone, not like the Scholar Gipsy to the high lonely wood or the deserted lasher, but is stepped down to jostle with the foulest and most venal of mankind. He becomes a satirist, and a satirist of the coarsest kind. His pages are crowded with filthy pictures and revolting images ; the leaves cannot be turned over so quickly but some lewd epithet or vile realism prints itself on the eye. His apologists have said that it is nothing but the overflowing indignation of a noble mind when confronted with the hideous vices of a corrupt court and nation ; that this deep-seated wrath is but an indication of the fervid idealistic nature of the man ; that the generous fire that warmed in the poems, consumed in the satires ; that the true moralist does not condone but condemn. To this we would answer that it is just conceivable a satirist being primarily occupied by an

immense moral indignation, and no doubt that indignation must bear a certain part in all satires; but it is not the attitude of a hopeful or generous soul. The satirist is after all only destructive; he has not learned the lesson that the only cure for old vices is new enthusiasms. Nor if a satirist is betrayed into the grossest and most unnecessary realism can we acquit him entirely of all enjoyment of his subject. It is impossible to treat of vice in the intimate and detailed manner in which Marvell treats of it without having, if no practical acquaintance with your subject, at least a considerable conventional acquaintance with it, and a large literary knowledge of the handling of similar topics; and when Dr. Grosart goes so far as to call Marvell an essentially pure-minded man, or words to that effect, we think he would find a contradiction on almost every page of the satires.

They were undoubtedly popular. Charles II. was greatly amused by them; and their reputation lasted as late as Swift, who spoke of Marvell's genius as preeminently indicated by the fact that though the controversies were forgotten, the satires still held the mind. He started with a natural equipment. That he was humorous his earlier poems show, as when for instance he makes Daphne say to Chloe:

Rather I away will pine,  
In a manly stubbornness,  
Than be fatted up express,  
For the cannibal to dine.

And he shows, too, in his earlier poems, much of the weightier and more dignified art of statement that makes the true satirist's work often read better in quotations than entire; as for instance—

Wilt thou all the glory have,  
That war or peace commend?  
Half the world shall be thy slave,  
The other half thy friend.

But belonging as they do to the period of melancholy decadence of Marvell's art, we are not inclined to

go at any length into the question of the satires. We see genius struggling like Laocoon in the grasp of a power whose virulence he did not measure, and to whom sooner or later the increasing languor must yield. Of course there are notable passages scattered throughout them. In *Last Instructions to a Painter*, the passage beginning, "Paint last the king, and a dead shade of night," where Charles II. sees in a vision the shape of Charles I. and Henry VIII. threatening him with the consequences of unsympathetic despotism and the pursuit of sensual passion, has a tragic horror and dignity of a peculiar kind; and the following specimen from *The Character of Holland* gives on the whole a good specimen of the strength and weakness of the author: Holland, that scarce deserves the name of land,

As but the off-scouring of the British sand,  
And so much earth as was contributed  
By English pilots when they heaved the lead,  
Or what by the Ocean's slow alluvion fell  
Of shipwrecked cockle or the mussel-shell,  
This undigested vomit of the sea,  
Fell to the Dutch by just propriety.

Clever beyond question; every couplet is an undeniable epigram, lucid, well-digested, elaborate; pointed, yet finikin withal,—it is easy to find a string of epithets for it. But to what purpose is this waste? To see this felicity spent on such slight and intemperate work is bitterness itself; such writing has, it must be confessed, every qualification for pleasing except the power to please.

Of the remainder of Marvell's life, there is little more to be said. He was private tutor at Eton to a Master Dutton, a relative of Cromwell's, and wrote a delightful letter about him to the Protector; but the serious business of his later life was Parliament. Of his political consistency we cannot form a high idea. He seems as we should expect him to have been, a Royalist at heart and by sympathy all along; "'Tis God-like good," he wrote,

"to save a falling king." Yet he was not ashamed to accept Cromwell as the angel of the Commonwealth, and to write in fulsome praise of Protector Richard; and his bond of union with the extreme Puritans was his intense hatred of prelacy and bishops which is constantly coming up. In *The Loyal Scot* he writes:

The friendly loadstone has not more combined,  
Than Bishops cramped the commerce of mankind.

And in *The Bermudas* he classes the fury of the elements with "Prelates' rage" as the natural enemies of the human race. Such was not the intermeddling in affairs that Milton had recommended. To fiddle, while Rome burnt, upon the almost divine attributes of her successive rulers, this was not the austere storage of song which Milton himself practised.

Andrew Marvell was for many years member for Hull, with his expenses paid by the Corporation. His immense, minute, and elaborate correspondence with his constituents, in which he gave an exact account of the progress of public business, remains to do him credit as a sagacious and conscientious man. But it cannot be certainly imputed to any higher motive than to stand well with his employers. He was provided with the means of livelihood, he was in a position of trust and dignity, and he may well be excused for wishing to retain it. In spite of certain mysterious absences on the Continent, and a long period during which he absented himself from the House in the suite of an embassy to Russia, he preserved their confidence for eighteen years and died at his post. He spoke but little in the House, and his reported speeches add but little to his reputation. One curious incident is related in the Journals. In going to his place he stumbled over Sir Philip Harcourt's foot, and an interchange of blows in a humorous and friendly fashion with hand and hat, took place. At the close of the sitting

the Speaker animadverted on this, Marvell being absent; and a brief debate took place the next day on the subject, Marvell speaking with some warmth of the Speaker's grave interference with what appears to have been nothing more than a piece of childish horse-play. "What passed (said Mr. Marvell) was through great acquaintance and familiarity between us. He never gave him an affront nor intended him any. But the Speaker cast a severe reflection upon him yesterday when he was out of the House, and he hopes that as the Speaker keeps us in order, he will keep himself in order for the future."

For one thing Marvell deserves high credit; in a corrupt age, he kept his hands clean, refusing even when hard pressed for money a gift of £1,000 proffered him by Danby, the Lord-Treasurer, "in his garret," as a kind of retainer on the royal side. In Hartley Coleridge's life of Marvell this is told in a silly, theatrical way, unworthy, and not even characteristic of the man. "Marvell," he says, "looking at the paper (an order on the Treasury which had been slipped into his hand) calls after the Treasurer, 'My lord, I request another moment.' They went up again to the garret; and Jack the servant-boy was called. 'Jack, child, what had I for dinner yesterday?' 'Don't you remember, sir? You had the little shoulder of mutton that you ordered me to bring from a woman in the market.' 'Very right, child. What have I for dinner to-day?' 'Don't you know, sir, that you bid me lay by the blade-bone to broil?' 'Tis so; very right, child; go away.' 'My lord do you hear that? Andrew Marvell's dinner is provided. There's your piece of paper; I want it not. I know the sort of kindness you intended. I live here to serve my constituents: the Ministry may seek men for their purpose,—I am not one.'" But with the exception of perhaps the concluding words, there is no reason to think the story authentic, though the fact is unquestioned.

Over Prince Rupert Marvell seems to have had a great influence, so much so that, when the Prince spoke in Parliament, it was commonly said: "He has been with his tutor."

Marvell died suddenly in 1678, not without suspicion of poisoning; but it seems to have been rather due to the treatment he underwent at the hands of an old-fashioned practitioner, who had a prejudice against the use of Peruvian bark which would probably have saved Marvell's life. Upon his death a widow starts into existence, Mary Marvell by name, so unexpectedly and with such a total absence of previous allusion that it has been doubted whether her marriage was not all a fiction. But Dr. Grosart points out that she would never have administered his estate had there been any reason to doubt the validity of her claims; and it was under her auspices that the Poems were first given to the world a few years after his death, in a folio which is now a rare and coveted book.

Of his Prose Works we have no intention of speaking; they may be characterised as prose satires for the most part, or political pamphlets. *The Rehearsal Transposed* and *The Divine in Mode* are peculiarly distasteful examples of a kind of controversy then much in vogue. They are answers to publications, and to the ordinary reader contrive to be elaborate without being artistic, personal without being humorous, and digressive without being entertaining; in short, they combine the characteristics of tedium, dullness, and scurrility to a perfectly phenomenal degree. Of course this is a matter of taste. No one but a clever man could have written them, and no one but an intelligent man could have edited them; but we confess to thinking that a conspiracy of silence would have done more credit both to editor and author. As compared with the poems themselves, the prose works fill many volumes; and any reader of

ordinary perseverance has ample opportunities of convincing himself of Andrew Marvell's powers of expression, his high-spirited beginning, the delicate ideals, the sequestered ambitions of his youth, and their lamentable decline.

It is a perilous investment to aspire to be a poet,—*periculosæ plenum opus aleæ*. If you succeed, to have the world present and to come at your feet, to win the reluctant admiration even of the Philistine; to snuff the incense of adoration on the one hand, and on the other to feel yourself a member of the choir invisible, the sweet and solemn company of poets; to own within yourself the ministry of hope and height. And one step below success, to be laughed at or softly pitied as the dreamer of ineffectual dreams, the strummer of impotent music; to be despised alike by the successful and the unsuccessful; the world if you win,—worse than nothing if you fail.

Mediocribus esse poetis  
Non di, non homines, non concessere  
columnæ.

There is no such thing as respectable mediocrity among poets. Be supreme or contemptible.

And yet we cannot but grieve when we see a poet over whose feet the stream has flowed, turn back from the brink and make the great denial; whether from the secret consciousness of aridity, the drying of the fount of song, or from the imperious temptations of the busy, ordinary world we cannot say. Somehow we have lost our poet. It seems that,

Just for a handful of silver he left us,  
Just for a ribbon to stick in his coat.

And the singer of an April mood, who might have bloomed year after year in young and ardent hearts, is buried in the dust of politics, in the valley of dead bones.



## HARVEST.

[Respectfully dedicated to our law-makers in India, who, by giving to the soldier-peasants of the Punjab the novel right of alienating their ancestral holdings, are fast throwing the land, and with it the balance of power, into the hands of money-grubbers; thus reducing those who stood by us in our time of trouble to the position of serfs.]

"*Ai!* Daughter of thy grandmother," muttered old Jaimul gently, as one of his yoke wavered, making the handle waver also. The offender was a barren buffalo doomed temporarily to the plough in the hopes of inducing her to look more favourably on the first duty of the female sex, so she started beneath the unaccustomed goad.

"*Ari!* sister, fret not," muttered Jaimul again, turning from obscure abuse to palpable flattery, as being more likely to gain his object; and once more the tilled soil glided between his feet, traced straight by his steady hand. In that vast expanse of bare brown field left by or waiting for the plough, each new furrow seemed a fresh diameter of the earth-circle which lay set in the bare blue horizon—a circle centring always on Jaimul and his plough. A brown dot for the buffalo, a white dot for the ox, a brown and white dot for the old peasant with his lanky brown limbs, and straight white drapery, his brown face, and long white beard. Brown, and white, and blue, with the promise of harvest some time if the blue was kind. That was all Jaimul knew or cared. The empire beyond hanging on the hope of harvest lay far from his simple imaginings; and yet he, the old peasant with his steady hand of patient control, held the reins of government over how many million square miles? That is the province of the Blue Book, and Jaimul's blue book was the sky.

"Bitter blue sky with no fleck of a cloud,  
Ho! brother ox! make the plough speed.

[*Ai! soorin!* straight I say!]

'Tis the usurers' bellies wax fat and proud  
When poor folk are in need."

The rude guttural chant following these silent, earth-deadened footsteps was the only sound breaking the stillness of the wide plain.

"Sky dappled grey like a partridge's breast,  
Ho! brother ox! drive the plough deep.

[Steady, my sister, steady!]  
The peasants work, but the usurers rest  
Till harvest's ripe to reap."

So on and on interminably, the chant and the furrow, the furrow and the chant, both bringing the same refrain of flattery and abuse, the same antithesis. The peasant and the usurer face to face in conflict, and above them both the fateful sky, changeless or changeful as it chooses.

The sun climbed up and up till the blue hardened into brass, and the mere thought of rain seemed lost in the blaze of light. Yet Jaimul as he finally unhitched his plough chanted away in serene confidence—

"Merry drops slanting from west to east,  
Ho! brother ox! drive home the wain;  
'Tis the usurer's belly that gets the least  
When Ram sends poor folk rain."

The home whither he drove the lagging yoke was but a whitish-brown mound on the bare earth-circle, not far removed from an ant-hill to alien eyes; for all that, home to the uttermost. Civilisation, education, culture could produce none better. A home bright with the welcome of women, the laughter of children. Old Kishnu,

mother of them all, wielding a relentless despotism tempered by profound affection over every one save her aged husband. Purtabi, widow of the eldest son, but saved from degradation in this life and damnation in the next by the tall lad whose grasp had already closed on his grandfather's plough-handle. Taradevi, whose soldier-husband was away guarding some scientific or unscientific frontier while she reared up, in the ancestral home, a tribe of sturdy youngsters to follow in his footsteps. Fighting and ploughing, ploughing and fighting; here was life epitomised for these long-limbed, grave-eyed peasants whose tongues never faltered over the shibboleth which showed their claim to courage.<sup>1</sup>

The home itself lay bare for the most part to the blue sky; only a few shallow outhouses, half room, half verandah, giving shelter from noon-day heat or winter frosts. The rest was courtyard, serving amply for all the needs of the household. In one corner a pile of golden chaff ready for the milch kine which came in to be fed from the mud mangers ranged against the wall; in another a heap of fuel, and the tall bee-hive-like mud receptacles for grain. On every side stores of something brought into existence by the plough—corn-cobs for husking, millet-stalks for the cattle, cotton awaiting deft fingers and the lacquered spinning-wheels which stand, cocked on end, against the wall. Taradevi sits on the white sheet spread beneath the quern, while her eldest daughter, a girl about ten years of age, lends slight aid to the revolving stones whence the coarse flour falls ready for the mid-day meal. Purtabi, down by the grain-bunkers, rakes more wheat from the funnel-like opening into her flat basket, and as she rises flings a handful to the pigeons sidling on the wall.

<sup>1</sup> Runjeet Singh never enlisted a man who, in counting up to thirty said *pach-is* for five and twenty, but those who said *punj-is* were passed. In other words, the *patois* was made a test of whether the recruit belonged to the Trans-Sutlej tribes or the Cis-Sutlej.

A fluttering of white wings, a glint of sunlight on opaline necks, while the children cease playing to watch their favourites tumble and strut over the feast. Even old Kishnu looks up from her preparation of curds without a word of warning against waste; for to be short of grain is beyond her experience. Wherefore was the usurer brought into the world save to supply grain in advance when the blue sky sided with capital against labour for a dry year or two?

"The land is ready," said old Jaimul over his pipe. "'Tis time for the seed—therefore I will seek Anant Ram at sunset and set my seal to the paper."

That was how the transaction presented itself to his accustomed eyes. Seed grain in exchange for yet another seal to be set in the long row which he and his forbears had planted regularly, year by year, in the usurer's field of accounts. As for the harvests of such sowings? Bah! there never were any. A real crop of solid, hard, red wheat was worth them all, and that came sometimes—might come any time if the blue sky was kind. He knew nothing of Statutes of Limitation or judgments of the Chief Court, and his inherited wisdom drew a broad line of demarcation between paper and plain facts.

Anant Ram the usurer, however, was of another school. A comparatively young man, he had brought into his father's ancestral business the modern selfishness which laughs to scorn all considerations save that for Number One. He and his forbears had made much out of Jaimul and his fellows; but was that any reason against making more, if more was to be made?

And more *was* indubitably to be made if Jaimul and his kind were reduced to the level of labourers. That handful of grain, for instance, thrown so recklessly to the pigeons—that might be the usurer's, and so might the plenty which went to build up the long, strong limbs of Taradevi's tribe of young soldiers; idle young scamps who thrashed

the usurer's boys as diligently during play-time as they were beaten by those clever weedy lads during school-hours.

"Seed grain," he echoed sulkily to the old peasant's calm demand. "Sure last harvest I left thee more wheat than most men in my place would have done ; for the account grows, O Jaimul ! and the land is mortgaged to the uttermost."

"Mayhap ! but it must be sown for all that, else *thou* wilt suffer as much as I. So quit idle words and give the seed as thou hast since time began. What do I know of accounts who can neither read, nor write ? 'Tis thy business, not mine."

"'Tis not my business to give ought for nought——"

"For nought," broke in Jaimul with the hoarse chuckle of the peasant availing himself of a time-worn joke. "Thou canst add that nought to thy figures, O *bunniah-ji* !<sup>1</sup> So bring the paper and have done with words. If Ram sends rain—and the omens are auspicious—thou canst take all but food and jewels for the women."

"Report saith thy house is rich enough in them already," suggested the usurer after a pause.

Jaimul's big white eyebrows met over his broad nose. What then, *bunniah-ji* ? he asked haughtily.

Anant Ram made haste to change the subject, whereat Jaimul, smiling softly, told the usurer that maybe more jewels would be needed with next seed grain, since if the auguries were once more propitious, the women purposed bringing home his grandson's bride ere another year had sped. The usurer smiled an evil smile.

"Set thy seal to this also," he said, when the seed grain had been measured ; "the rules demand it. A plague, say I, on all these new-fangled papers the *sahib-logue* ask of us. Look you ! how I have to pay for the stamps and fees ; and then you old ones say we new

ones are extortionate. We must live, O *zemindar-ji* !<sup>2</sup> even as thou livest."

"Live !" retorted the old man with another chuckle. "Wherefore not ! The land is good enough for you and for me. There is no fault in the land !"

"Ay ! it is good enough for me, and for you," echoed the usurer slowly. He inverted the pronouns—that was all.

So Jaimul, as he had done ever since he could remember, walked over the bare plain with noiseless feet, and watched the sun flash on the golden grain as it flew from his thin brown fingers. And once again the guttural chant kept time to his silent steps.

"Wheat grains grow to wheat,  
And the seed of a tare to tare ;  
Who knows if man's soul will meet  
Man's body to wear.

"Great Ram, grant me life  
From the grain of a golden deed ;  
Sink not my soul in the strife  
To wake as a weed."

After that his work in the fields was over. Only at sunrise and sunset his tall, gaunt figure stood out against the circling sky as he wandered through the sprouting wheat waiting for the rain which never came. Not for the first time in his long life of waiting, so he took the wait calmly, soberly.

"It is a bad year," he said, "the next will be better. For the sake of the boy's marriage I would it had been otherwise, but Anant Ram must advance the money. It is his business." Whereat Jodha, the youngest son, better versed than his father in new ways, shook his head doubtfully. "Have a care of Anant, O *baba-ji*,"<sup>3</sup> he suggested with diffidence. "Folk say he is sharper than ever his father was."

"'Tis a trick sons have, or think they have, nowadays," retorted old Jaimul wrathfully. "Anant can wait for payment as his fathers waited. God knows the interest is enough to stand a dry season or two."

In truth fifty per cent., and payment

<sup>1</sup> *Bunniah*, a merchant. *Bunniah-ji* signifies, as Shakespeare would have said, Sir Merchant.

<sup>2</sup> *Zemindar-ji*, Sir Squire.

<sup>3</sup> *Baba*, as a term of familiarity, is applied indifferently to young and old.

in kind at the lowest harvest rates, with a free hand in regard to the cooking of accounts should have satisfied even a usurer's soul. But Anant Ram wanted that handful of grain for the pigeons and the youngsters' mess of pottage. He wanted the land in fact, and so the long row of dibbled-in seals dotting the unending scroll of accounts began to sprout and bear fruit. Drought gave them life, while it brought death to many a better seed.

"Not give the money for the boy's wedding!" shrilled old Kishnu six months after in high displeasure. "Is the man mad? When the fields are the best in all the country side."

"True enough, O! wife; but he says the value under these new rules the *sahib-logue* make is gone already. That he must wait another harvest, or have a new seal of me."

"Is that all, O! Jaimul Singh, and thou causing my liver to melt with fear? A seal—what is a seal or two more against the son of thy son's marriage?"

"'Tis a new seal," muttered Jaimul uneasily, "and I like not new things. Perhaps 'twere better to wait the harvest."

"Wait the harvest and lose the auspicious time the *purohit*<sup>1</sup> hath found written in the stars? *Ai*, Taradevi! *Ai*! Purtabi! there is to be no marriage, hark you! The boy's strength is to go for nought, and the bride is to languish alone because the father of his father is afraid of a usurer! *Haè, Haè!*"

The women wept the easy tears of their race, mingled with half-real, half-pretended fears lest the Great Ones might resent such disregard of their good omens; the old man sitting silent meanwhile, for there is no tyranny like the tyranny of those we love. Despite all this, his native shrewdness held his tenderness in check. They would get over it, he

told himself, and a good harvest would do wonders—ay! even the wonders which the *purohit* was always finding in the skies. Trust a good fee for that! So he hardened his heart, went back to Anant Ram, and told him that he had decided on postponing the marriage. The usurer's face fell. To be so near the seal which would make it possible for him to foreclose the mortgages, and yet to fail! He had counted on this marriage for years; the blue sky itself had fought for him so far, and now—what if the coming harvest were a bumper?

"But I will seal for the seed grain," said old Jaimul; "I have done that before and I will do it again—we know that bargain of old."

Anant Ram closed his pen-tray with a snap. "There is no seed grain for you, *baba-ji*, this year either," he replied calmly.

Ten days afterwards, Kishnu, Purtabi, and Taradevi were bustling about the courtyard with the untiring energy which fills the Indian woman over the mere thought of a wedding, and Jaimul, out in the fields, was chanting as he scattered the grain into the furrows—

"Wrinkles and seams and sears  
On the face of our mother earth;  
There are ever sorrow and tears  
At the gates of birth."

The mere thought of the land lying fallow had been too much for him; so safe in the usurer's strong-box lay a deed with the old man's seal sitting cheek by jowl beside Anant Ram's brand-new English signature. And Jaimul knew, in a vague, unrestful way, that this harvest differed from other harvests, in that more depended upon it. So he wandered oftener than ever over the brown expanse of field where a flush of green showed that Mother Earth had done her part and was waiting for Heaven to take up the task.

The wedding fire-balloons rose from the courtyard, and drifted away to form constellations in the cloudless sky; the sound of wedding drums

<sup>1</sup> *Purohit*, a spiritual teacher, a sage; answering in some respects to the Red Indian's Medicine-man.

and pipes disturbed the stillness of the starlit nights, and still day by day the green shoots grew lighter and lighter in colour because the rain came not. Then suddenly, like a man's hand, a little cloud! "Merry drops slanting from west to the east;" merrier by far to Jaimul's ears than all the marriage music was that low rumble from the canopy of purple cloud, and the discordant scream of the peacock telling of the storm to come. Then in the evening, when the setting sun could only send a bar of pale primrose light between the solid purple and the solid brown, what joy to pick a dry-shod way along the boundary ridges and see the promise of harvest doubled by the reflection of each tender green spikelet in the flooded fields! The night settled down dark, heavenly dark, with a fine spray of steady rain in the old, weather-beaten face, as it set itself towards home.

The blue sky was on the side of labour this time, and, during the next month or so, Taradevi's young soldiers made mud pies, and crowed more lustily than ever over the *bunniah's* boys.

Then the silvery beard began to show in the wheat, and old Jaimul laughed aloud in the fulness of his heart.

"That is an end of the new seal," he said boastfully, as he smoked his pipe in the village square. "It is a poor man's harvest, and no mistake."

But Anant Ram was silent. The April sun had given some of its sunshine to the yellowing crops before he spoke.

"I can wait no longer for my money, O *baba-ji*!" he said; "the three years are nigh over, and I must defend myself."

"What three years?" asked Jaimul, in perplexity.

"The three years during which I can claim my own according to the *sahib-logue's* rule. You must pay, or I must sue."

"Pay before harvest! What are these fool's words? Of course I will

pay in due time; hath not great Ram sent me rain to wash out the old writing?"

"But what of the new one, *baba-ji*?—the cash lent on permission to foreclose the mortgages?"

"If the harvest failed—if it failed," protested Jaimul, quickly. "And I knew it could not fail. The stars said so, and great Ram would not have it so."

"That is old-world talk!" sneered Anant. "We do not put that sort of thing in the bond. You sealed it, and I must sue."

"What good to sue ere harvest? What money have I? But I will pay good grain when it comes, and the paper can grow as before."

Anant Ram sniggered.

"What good, O *baba-ji*? Why, the land will be mine, and I can take, not what you give me, but what I choose. For the labourer his hire, and the rest for me."

"Thou art mad!" cried Jaimul, but he went back to his fields with a great fear at his heart—a fear which sent him again to the usurer's ere many days were over.

"Here are my house's jewels," he said briefly, "and the mare thou hast coveted these two years. Take them, and write off my debt till harvest."

Anant Ram smiled again.

"It shall be part payment of the acknowledged claim," he said; "let the courts decide on the rest."

"After the harvest?"

"Ay, after the harvest; in consideration of the jewels."

Anant Ram kept his word, and the fields were shorn of their crop ere the summons to attend the District Court was brought to the old peasant.

"By the Great Spirit who judges all it is a lie!" That was all he could say as the long, carefully-woven tissue of fraud and cunning blinded even the eyes of a justice biassed in his favour. The records of our Indian law-courts teem with such cases—cases where even equity can do nothing against the evidence of pen and paper. No



need to detail the strands which formed the net. The long array of seals had borne fruit at last, fiftyfold, sixtyfold, a hundredfold ; a goodly harvest for the usurer.

"Look not so glum, friend," smiled Anant Ram, as they pushed old Jaimul from the court at last, dazed but still vehemently protesting. "Thou and Jodha thy son shall till the land as ever, seeing thou art skilled in such work, but there shall be no idlers ; and the land, mark you, is *mine*, not yours."

A sudden gleam of furious hate sprang to the strong old face, but died away as quickly as it came.

"Thou liest," said Jaimul ; "I will appeal. The land is mine. It hath been mine and my fathers' under the king's pleasure since time began. Kings, ay, and queens, for that matter, are not fools, to give good land to the *bunniah's* belly. Can a *bunniah* plough?"

Yet as he sat all day about the court-house steps awaiting some legal detail or other, doubt even of his own incredulity came over him. He had often heard of similar misfortunes to his fellows, but somehow the possibility of such evil appearing in his own life had never entered his brain. And what would Kishnu say—after all these years, these long years of content?

The moon gathering light as the sun set shone full on the road, as the old man, with downcast head, made his way across the level plain to the mud hovel which had been a true home to him and his for centuries. His empty hands hung at his sides, and the fingers twitched nervously as if seeking something. On either side the bare stubble, stretching away from the track which led deviously to the scarce discernible hamlets here and there. Not a soul in sight, but every now and again a glimmer of light showing where some one was watching the heaps of new threshed grain upon the threshing-floors.

And then a straighter thread of path leading right upon his own fields and the village beyond. What was that? A man riding before him. The

blood leapt through the old veins, and the old hands gripped in upon themselves. So he—that liar riding ahead—was to have the land, was he? Riding the mare too, while he, Jaimul, came behind afoot,—yet for all that gaining steadily with long swinging stride on the figure ahead. A white figure on a white horse like death ; or was the avenger behind beneath the lank folds of drapery which fluttered round the walker?

The land! No! He should never have the land. How could he? The very idea was absurd. Jaimul, thinking thus, held his head erect and his hands relaxed their grip. He was close on the rider now, and just before him, clear in the moonlight, rose the boundary mark of his fields—a loose pile of sun-baked clods, hardened by many a dry year of famine to the endurance of stone. Beside it, the shallow whence they had been dug, showing a gleam of water still held in the stiff clay. The mare paused, straining at the bridle for a drink, and Jaimul almost at her heels paused also, involuntarily, mechanically. For a moment they stood thus, a silent white group in the moonlight, then the figure on the horse slipped to the ground and moved a step forward. Only one step, but that was within the boundary. Then, above the even wheeze of the thirsty beast, rose a low chuckle as the usurer stooped for a handful of soil and let it glide through his fingers.

"It is good ground! Ay, Ay—none better."

They were his last words. In fierce passion of love, hate, jealousy, and protection old Jaimul closed on his enemy, and found something to grip with his steady old hands. Not the plough-handle this time, but a throat, a warm living throat where you could feel the blood swelling in the veins beneath your fingers. Down almost without a struggle, the old face above the young one, the lank knee upon the broad body. And now quick! for something to slay withal, ere age tired

in its contest with youth and strength. There, ready since all time, stood the landmark, and one clod after another snatched from it fell on the upturned face with a dull thud. Fell again and again, crashed and broke to crumbling soil. Good soil! Ay! none better! Wheat might grow in it and give increase fortyfold, sixtyfold, ay, a hundredfold. Again, again, and yet again, with dull insistence till there was a shuddering sigh and then silence. Jaimul stood up quivering from the task and looked over his fields. They were at least free from that *thing* at his feet; for what part in this world's harvest could belong to the ghastly figure with its face beaten to a jelly, which lay staring up into the overarching sky? So far, at any rate, the business was settled for ever, and in so short a time that the mare had scarcely slaked her thirst and still stood with head down, the water dripping from her muzzle. The *thing* would never ride her again either. Half-involuntarily he stepped to her side and loosened the girth.

"*Ari*! sister," he said aloud, "thou hast had enough. Go home."

The docile beast obeyed his well-known voice, and as her echoing amble died away Jaimul looked at his blood-stained hands and then at the formless face at his feet. There was no home for him, and yet he was not sorry, or ashamed, or frightened; only dazed at the hurry of his own act. Such things had to be done sometimes when folk were unjust. They would hang him for it, of course, but he had at least made his protest, and done his deed as good men and true should do when the time came. So he left the horror staring up into the sky and made his way to the threshing-floor, which lay right in the middle of his fields. How white the great heaps of yellow corn showed in the moonlight, and how large! His heart leapt with a fierce joy at the sight. Here was harvest indeed! Some one lay asleep upon the biggest pile, and his stern old face relaxed into a smile as, stoop-

ing over the careless sentinel, he found it was his grandson. The boy would watch better as he grew older, thought Jaimul as he drew his cotton plaid gently over the smooth round limbs outlined among the yielding grain, lest the envious moon might covet their promise of beauty.

"Son of my son! Son of my son!" he murmured over and over again as he sat down to watch out the night beside his corn for the last time. Yes, for the last time! At dawn the deed would be discovered; they would take him, and he would not deny his own handiwork. Why should he? The midnight air of May was hot as a furnace, and as he wiped the sweat from his forehead it mingled with the dust and blood upon his hands. He looked at them with a curious smile before he lay back among the corn. Many a night he had watched the slow stars wheeling to meet the morn, but never by a fairer harvest than this.

The boy at his side stirred in his sleep. "Son of my son! Son of my son!" came the low murmur again. Ay! and his son after him again, if the women said true. It had always been so. Father and son, father and son, father—and son—for ever,—and ever,—and ever.

So, lulled by the familiar thought, the old man fell asleep beside the boy, and the whole bare expanse of earth and sky seemed empty save for them. No! there was something else surely. Down on the hard white threshing-floor—was that a branch or a fragment of rope? Neither, for it moved deviously hither and thither, raising a hooded head now and again as if seeking something; for all its twists and turns bearing steadily towards the sleepers; past the boy, making him shift uneasily as the cold coil touched his arms: swifter now as it drew nearer the scent till it found what it sought upon the old man's hands.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Snakes are said to be attracted by the scent of blood, as they are undoubtedly by that of milk.

"*Ari*, sister ! straight, I say, straight !" murmured the old ploughman in his sleep as his grip strengthened over something that wavered in his steady clasp. Was that the prick of the goad ? Sure if it bit so deep upon the sister's hide no wonder she started. He must keep his grip for men's throats when sleep was over—when this great sleep was over.

The slow stars wheeled, and when the morn brought Justice, it found old Jaimul dead among his corn and left him there. But the women washed the stains of blood and sweat mingled with soil and seed grains from his hands, before the wreath of smoke from his funeral pyre rose up to

make a white cloud no bigger than a man's hand upon the bitter blue sky ; a cloud that brought gladness to no heart.

The usurer's boys, it is true, forced the utmost from the land, and sent all save bare sustenance across the seas ; but the home guided by Jaimul's unswerving hand was gone, and Taradevi's tribe of budding soldiers drifted away to learn the lawlessness born of change. Perhaps the yellow English gold which came into the country in return for the red Indian wheat more than paid for these trivial losses. Perhaps it did not. That is a question which the next Mutiny must settle.

## IN THE LAND OF CHAMPAGNE.

A FEW years ago M. Gaston Chandon, whose name cannot but awaken pleasurable memories in many minds, initiated a literary competition to do honour to the wine of which his firm have been such distinguished producers. There were more than eleven hundred candidates throughout the Republic. The judges were called upon to read sonnets, satires, elegies, ballads, and laudatory pieces of prose by the score, and also a tragedy in five acts,—all assuming to be in praise of champagne, “the most aristocratic wine in the universe.” The competitors themselves were as varied in their stations of life as the fruits of their literary efforts. One cannot marvel that there were many wine-merchants among them. But ladies of high rank, parish priests, and schoolboys, also tried their genius upon so alluring a theme. They could hardly have had one more fit to inspire them, especially if they remembered, like good patriots, Voltaire’s sparkling allusion to it :

De ce vin frais l’écume pétillante  
De nos Français est l’image brillante.

This parallel has much truth in it. We are not concerned to say if it be wholly a complimentary one. But the average Frenchman is well content to be thought a lively and amiable gentleman, and it will not, therefore, pain him to be reminded that “body” is not the quality in which champagne most excels.

The other day I found myself in Epernay somewhat late in the evening. It was on the eve of the Autumn Manœuvres, and the place was full of troops. For bedroom accommodation I had to choose between the stables and a little hole of a room which looked down upon the stables, and smelt as sweet as if ten miry steeds had been

washed and stalled in it. The corridors of the hotel resounded with the martial clank of swords, and their owners seemed in the humour to slight civilians as beings quite beneath their notice. I could not, in short, have come into Champagne-land at a worse opportunity. But still later in the evening, when I had dined and drunk some very ordinary red champagne, I congratulated myself that I had arrived at this conjuncture. There were notices upon the walls inviting the good citizens of Epernay to attend a concert offered to them by M. Chandon. And attend it they did by thousands. It was a chilly night of early autumn, with a heavy dew in the air. But in spite of this, old men and women from the vicinity, with quaint puckered faces, were to be seen sitting side by side with the *élite* of the town, while youths and children lay at full length or rolled about the grass in extreme enjoyment of the great champagne-merchant’s æsthetic treat. Among much else the programme included the Russian hymn, a choice morsel from Rossini, the *Marseillaise* and *La Foire d’Epernay*. The people were unmistakably happy. It was clear that the cellars beneath our feet, and their precious contents, are a blessing to this bright red-roofed town on the chalk slopes overlooking the green valley of the Marne.

The next day I walked to Rheims through vineyards with magic names on the stones which divided section from section. It was an enchanting forenoon, with a blue sky and a slumberous breeze from the hills. Men and women were at work among the vines, and their blouses and gowns matched well with the verdure. The hot sun had already licked up the dew, and the soil was in hard nodules. A month later the grapes would be ripe. The

traditional lore of that venerable manual of the vinegrower, *La Maison Rustique*, is still held in regard in Champagne. Dew, damp, hoar frost, and April showers keep the labourer aloof from the vineyards except during the harvest. Then, however, a certain humidity is desirable. "You must," says this respected treatise, "try not to pluck except on days with a heavy dew, and, in warm seasons, after a shower. This moisture gives the grapes an azure bloom outside, and within a coolness which keeps them from heating. A foggy day is something to be glad of. The plucking begins half an hour after sunrise, and if the day is cloudless, and it becomes rather hot towards nine or ten o'clock, you must then stop. Not all the grapes are to be gathered without discrimination, nor at any hour of the day. The ripest and those of the deepest purple are to be chosen first. A hundred pickers will go through a vineyard of thirty acres in three or four hours to make an early vat of ten or twelve pieces." It was easy to picture the scene on these sunny slopes during the first week or two of October. But it was sad to see the comparative smallness of the bunches this year. There was no lack of witness, oral as well as ocular, to the exceeding poverty of the vintage of 1891. The long winter and the subsequent rain had played terrible havoc among the vines.

One is by no means among vineyards all the way between Epernay and Rheims. The two places are separated by a stout mountain with many a square mile of forest on the level summit; and the road traverses this woodland straight as a needle. It is quite a lonely part of the world. The railway does not trouble it. Wild boar and deer have it much to themselves except during the hunting-season; and in the heart of it, by a little clearing near the road, I came upon "the image of our Lady, adored from time immemorial in this place." It was nailed to an oak tree, having been replaced there in 1880, "and solemnly

blessed in the midst of a crowd by the Archbishop of Rheims." Of course too there was a strong box adjacent. This was guarded by three padlocks, so that one might assume it was not a penurious coffer. But the mosquitoes were so virulent round about the shrine in the cool shade that I did not tarry long enough to give a single pilgrim the chance to appear with a donation.

With the beginning of the forest on the Epernay side of the mountain the vineyards cease. Nor do they reappear where the road falls to the north towards the great towers of the cathedral looming large above the houses of the city in the plain. Here corn and beetroot are in the ascendant, and there is so little shade that in the dog-days the long undeviating road of a dozen *kilometres* must be somewhat purgatorial. Even upon this ordinary September afternoon I rejoiced to reach the brand-new houses of the suburbs, which sprawl away into brick-yards and disaffected grain-fields like the suburbs of other large towns. But high above this unlovely quarter were the cherished cathedral towers, and the bells from the belfry loosed their music upon the air and sent the ancient jackdaws of the place circling from their perches upon the stone heads of saints, martyrs, and monarchs.

Rheims cannot be termed a very vivacious city. I would even call it dull were I not deterred by the knowledge that there are millions of bottles of champagne beneath its streets. But it really is not anything like so sparkling as it ought to be. True, it has sundry public places in which nursemaids and the aged promenade methodically, tram-cars in its streets, a theatre, and an exhilarating history. You may buy a glass of champagne in its shops for thirty *centimes*, and completely lose count of common life in an attempt to identify the stone images encrusting the façade of the cathedral. Nevertheless it does not cast upon the visitor those sudden



bonds of fascination with which other places, perhaps less distinguished, ensnare the affections.

I had heard that the hotel in which Joan of Arc was lodged during the coronation of Charles VII. still existed and received guests. To this house therefore I went, and herein I obtained a bedroom whence I could see about fifty square yards of the cathedral front and the towers with the jackdaws bustling in and out of the belfry. But I found I was under a certain misconception. Joan herself had never been bedded in the old place, the tiers of galleries about the inner courtyard of which were reminiscent of the ages. She no doubt had statelier lodging at the Archbishop's over the way. But her father and mother, good honest folks, had been brought hither, and were here treated at the city's expense. In the vestibule of the hotel there was a copy of the document by which the Council agreed that the old couple should be housed and lodged gratis. There was also an extremely ornate room designed to transport the visitor into that fifteenth century which was not altogether one of triumph for the English arms. Here I might smoke and read in Gothic ease, and look my fill at certain large frescoes illustrating scenes in the life of the poor Maid. But they were frescoes designed rather to satisfy a Frenchman than to exalt an Englishman in his own esteem. In those days the inn was called *L'Ane Rayé*, which seems susceptible of various translations. Now that nearly six centuries have passed since Joan's burning at Rouen, it is known as the *Maison Rouge*.

After dinner the gentle tedium of the place was fully declared. My fellow guests at the meal were large elderly men with white hair who said nothing to each other but accepted the common interchanges of civility with courtly bows and the most complete politeness. The waiters were like unto my companions,—old and worn, but as respectable and pleasant to behold

as a meerschaum pipe in the twentieth year of its coloration. They could not have treated us with more consideration had we been princes of the blood,—from Russia. But when afterwards I consulted the youngest of these veterans about the disposal of the ensuing hours, he looked at me in blank bewilderment. My bedroom candle, he assured me, was ready. This at half-past eight in the evening, after a dinner of ten courses! Nor could he be persuaded to see that I might be disinclined to follow the example of the mass of inhabitants in this city of a hundred thousand souls, in retiring to bed at ten o'clock. In effect, however, that is what I did. I smoked my cigar at a *café* where certain shameless young men were gambling for *sous*, and certain others sat rigid and silent looking at them. Then I strolled into the long *Place Drouet d'Erlon*, where the stumpy little houses and fat bow-windows intruding far upon the pavement bore eloquent testimony to the age of the architecture, and where, behind the doors of two or three eating-houses (with champagne at thirty *centimes* the glass), I heard sounds of mild revelry which seemed to shock the stray passers-by. And afterwards I returned to the hotel, was greeted with a benevolent smile of approval from an old waiter, and sent to bed, where I slept until the bells of the cathedral awoke me at five the next morning, and recalled to my mind that I was under an engagement to become intimately acquainted with the champagne of Rheims in the course of the day.

But before presenting myself at the great House of Heidsieck, I paid my respects to the interior of the cathedral. It does not impress like the exterior; yet there is enough of hallowed calm here to deter one from the audacity of comparing it unfavourably with other cathedrals. A magnificent official in a cocked hat, silk stockings, and a sword trod the aisle like one at home in it. The Archbishop himself could not have looked more imposing.

There chanced this morning to be a service of an uncommon kind. Several years back a number of tailors of the city formed a benevolent society, the chief object of which was the relief of the necessitous. The Church also was implicated in this good intention. Annually the worthy tailors were to meet in the cathedral and celebrate their anniversary, not unattended by positive proofs of the excellent deeds they had done and were about to do. This was the explanation of the troop of little girls in snow-white muslin, gossamer veils, and with bouquets in their hands; of the small boys with rosettes in their buttonholes, and their faces wearing the conspicuous glaze of a recent and unwonted visitation; and of sundry impatient old gentlemen with white gloves and shiny black clothes which (remembering their vocation) sat with but little grace upon them. The majestic official did his best to restrain the excitement of these various associates of the tailors' benefaction until the arrival of the little acolytes in scarlet with tall candles, and also of the clergy who were to conduct the service. With these newcomers came two large baskets of loaves, and also a smaller one containing discreet slices of bread. Then the service began, the elderly members of the congregation being honoured with seats near the high altar, which enabled them periodically to gaze with extreme severity upon the young acolytes, who smiled consumedly at the bread, and at the tailors even, during the Mass itself. Indeed, one of the lads was so overcome with the humour of the scene, that the officiating priest paused in the service to reprove him by a look that he ought not soon to have forgotten. This, remember, at the high altar of the first cathedral of France! Afterwards, there was a collection, and simultaneously, as a *quid pro quo*, one of the tailors went about with the basket of loose slices of bread, distributing them at random. To the priest who had just said the responses he

gave a piece, and also to the small acolyte who had behaved so badly. The little boys with rosettes, and the self-conscious little girls in bridal attire, also participated in the charity, and straightway began to eat their pieces with great heartiness and smiling glances this way and that. All which, combined with the proud yet nervous air of the parchmented little tailor who made the doles, was again quite too much for the naughty acolyte, who had to retire behind the altar with the censer to compose himself.

Of its kind I have seen few ceremonies more interesting than this of the tailors in the cathedral of Rheims. It was so distinctly redolent of long past times, when the various guilds of a town were bodies as potent as they were respectable. The fussy little tailors seemed to be not unaware of the interest they excited, which added yet keener zest to the service. But when it was over, and they had come out of the exclusive precincts of the choir (where they are thus privileged to sit once a year) their talk among us of the common world was of no very dignified nature. I had the misfortune to be an auditor of a heated argument between the three smallest and fussiest of the men about the restaurant at which they were now to meet and breakfast together, in honour of their anniversary. The one tailor praised the restaurant he nominated, and the other two each had a preference of their own. So it went on for minutes, until, with a mild condescending smile, the magnificent be-sworded guardian of the cathedral urged all the tailors to the west portal, and bowed them into the open air.

During the long day of its existence Rheims Cathedral has seen many a thousand such scenes as this. But the fashions have vastly changed in the meanwhile. Doublets are not now what they were when Charles VII. went in state up the aisle to bring new hope to France; nor are

church ceremonies. In the old days a guild festival of this kind would have been attended by the citizens and their wives and daughters by the hundred. But to the few townsfolk and others who watched the ceremony on this occasion it was merely a starched bit of a spectacle, more apt to tickle the laughter in a man than to excite his reverence.

From the cathedral it is no long walk to the Rue de Sedan, where the producers of Dry Monopole have their offices. I expected to find myself in an atmosphere elevating with the diffused bouquet of champagne. But the cellars of Messrs. Heidsieck are a considerable distance from their offices, and there was not so much as a cork visible in the place to hint at the nature of the business here so abundantly conducted. Perhaps it is as well that it is so. It is said that the very fumes of the cellars sometimes prove too much for the head of a weakly man. And I myself can vouch for the fact that they become distinctly nauseating after even two or three hours.

It is not the custom with the champagne-merchants of Rheims to treat their workmen and workwomen as the traditional confectioner treats his apprentice. They do not in fact attempt to breed in them a distaste for champagne. That I suppose were a crime of high treason against the majesty of the noble vine. In the premises of Pommery, indeed, it is the vogue to offer one glass of champagne daily to the persons employed. That taken before work begins may well be thought to serve as an agreeable and useful stimulant to labour. But the common beverage in the cellars is a good, sound, red wine, which is dispensed to the workers in no stinted measure. I am told that there are members of the fair sex at Heidsieck's (cork-stampers, bottle-markers, &c.) who dispose of four quart bottles of red wine during their ten hours of work. The men too are a thirsty race. Madame Pommery is less lavish with her ser-

vants. She allows them a couple of bottles each in the day, which seems adequate.

From the ground floor of the spacious warehouse into which one enters from the inner courtyard of Messrs. Heidsieck's premises, a shaft descends vertically about a hundred and fifty feet into the ground. It is sunk through solid chalk. From the main shaft there are three lateral galleries which connect with each other by staircases. These galleries hold the millions of bottles of champagne which are the necessary equipment of a first-rate modern Rheims House. The vertical shaft is of course for mechanical purposes only. Here is a machine and an endless chain, which lift the wine to the surface in cases. The wine is made (if the word may be used where "fabricated" would not do equally well) below, and packed for exportation above.

The temperature in these gloomy corridors cut in the native rock never varies from about 46° Fahr. In winter the men enjoy it for its mildness; but in summer it seems far from genial. The excessive dampness too must be prejudicial in many cases. If you touch the heavy canvas screens which divide the galleries, you feel that you could squeeze quarts of water from them, and the walls of course reek with moisture. Yet there is really not a degree too much of cold, nor one drop too much of humidity in the cellars. All this is necessary to tame the high spirits of the Champagne wine. The loss by bursting bottles is enormous, even under these conditions of discomfort for mortals and restraint for wine.

There is electric light in the cellars but its lustre seems much abated by the prevalent gloom and oppressive humidity. The men working among the bottles thirty yards away are but dimly visible. And what tedious uninspiring work some of it is! Imagine, for instance, a person spending ten hours of continuous toil in lifting bottles from their racks, giving them a

turn or two, and replacing them. This too in absolute solitude, in a slip of a gallery deviating from a main corridor, and curtained off from the hollow sound of his comrades' voices in the distance by the wet sackcloth at the opening. No doubt, with men of conscience and concentration, this loneliness serves well enough in the interests of the firm. A deft workman will, it is said, turn from five-and-twenty to thirty thousand bottles daily. This is his work day after day. It is one of the various processes which give us a wine clear as crystal, from which almost every particle of sediment has been coaxed and expelled. But it does not suit all men. Some cannot stand the dismal monotony, which really seems almost on a par with certain of the experiences of a Siberian exile. Life in the champagne cellars does not tend to length of days. After a spell of years in such employment the man seems to have become unfitted for continuous existence above the ground and in a drier air. While he is daily in the damp atmosphere of 45° or 46°, and supported by a daily magnum or two of good red wine, he has not much to complain about. But afterwards he is apt to fall to pieces. Fifty-five is reckoned a good age for him to attain.

Of the various details of the making of good champagne none is more interesting than the final stage, immediately precedent to the second and last corking. This occurs when the wine has been in bottle long enough to have had all the sediment brought towards the cork by the systematic turning and the general inclination of the bottle itself. If you look at the sediment in such a bottle you may well be surprised at its bulk and apparent solidity. It shows itself as a substance by the cork from half an inch to an inch in length. The contrast of its whiteness with the pellucid gold of the nether wine is quite curious. And it is from this stratum of fine white particles, the crystallised tartar of the wine, that

each bottle has successively to be freed by the process known as *dégagement*, though more often called *disgorgement*.

Much depends upon the skill of the "disgorger" as we will call the man who sits at his work, and takes bottle after bottle to operate upon. Unless he can time his movements to the second, he is more than likely to spill an unnecessary amount of the pure wine in expelling the sediment. This, with millions of bottles, of course would mean the sacrifice of a vast deal of wine. The disgorgers are therefore the best paid men in the champagne vaults. At Heidsieck's a method is in vogue which freezes the sediment so that it comes out as a lump of ice. The bottle is then passed by the disgorger to another man who fills the vacuum caused by the removal of this substance with champagne liqueur. Some people suppose that brandy is used for this purpose, but that is a popular error.

With all possible speed the bottle passes finally to the corker, who soon solves the riddle of how a cork with a natural diameter of an inch and a quarter can be got into a bottle mouth having a diameter of but three quarters of an inch. Fifty years ago the corking was done in the old-fashioned way, with a strong arm and a mallet. The bottles then sometimes broke to pieces under the vigorous blows they had to bear, and the bottler bottled at his peril. It still happens of course that in disgorging its sediment occasionally a bottle flies to pieces and endangers the disgorger. But upon the whole the risks are much less than they were. Improvements in the processes of champagne-making are not infrequent; yet there is still an opening for the inventive mind. There is, as the phrase runs, a fortune at hand for the man who can design a non-absorptive cork.

It is quite a relief to emerge from the damp chill home of these millions of bottles of champagne, and to glance at the women above working in the



blessed daylight and breathing a more congenial air. Here are sacks of corks, and the dames and girls may be seen giving the impress of Dry Monopole to one cork after another. The cork itself is of the best obtainable quality ; with a little search among the stamped pieces, you may discover some of a material as smooth as planed deal.

The wrapping of the tinfoil round the necks of the bottles and the labelling are also women's work. It is interesting to learn that the red foil bottles are for Germany. They indicate a sweeter wine than that which goes to England. Canning once said that the man who declared that he preferred dry champagne to sweet lied unblushingly. This was of course a candid confession of inexperience on the part of the statesman. His words would be received with polite incredulity among the people of Rheims. And certainly, after drinking a bottle of Dry Monopole here among the models of old champagne bottles during the last century, one has no desire for anything sweeter. My guide informed me that he has more than once taken as much as four bottles of the wine without inconvenience. The occasions were festive and exceptional ; but his words were none the less a compliment both to the wine and to his own head and stomach.

It must not be thought, in spite of the immense and growing consumption of champagne all over the world, that the trade of wine-merchant in Rheims is one of sure and easy prosperity. Perhaps only one year in twelve can be termed a good vintage. The man without enough capital to wait for the good vintages to balance the bad ones must not hope to make a reputation and the fortune that follows a reputation. There must, too, be an immense sum invested in reserve wines, especially in a house like Heidsieck's, which relies mainly upon the production of a wine of uniform quality. Dry Monopole is Dry Monopole all the world over. If you are sure the bottle before you contains this, you know

exactly what pleasure is in store for you. But the makers of Dry Monopole have toiled about a hundred years for their fame. I ask upon what amount of capital a house like theirs could be established, and am told that with five or six millions of francs the experiment might be made. As for the result of the experiment, however, it would be like tossing up a coin and crying *head or tail*.

One set of cellars in Rheims much resembles another. There is, however, something peculiarly captivating to the imagination in the larger and loftier vaults of the great House of Pommery. Here the eye is appealed to much more than in the galleries of Messrs. Heidsieck. There is no electric lighting, but the daylight descends in places down huge yawning shafts pierced in the chalk. The Romans are said to have begun these useful excavations in Rheims, and Messrs. Pommery and Greno have much improved upon their freehold of old Rome's labours. The number of bottles here may be two or three times as many as in Heidsieck's cellars. It is impossible to give an exact account. There are miles of them, with from twelve to fifteen million bottles by the wayside ; and between five and six hundred men and women attend to them.

Bearing in mind the vastness of the supply, it does not seem that the champagne-makers of Rheims act with an imprudent generosity in offering as they do bottle after bottle of their choicest wine to their casual visitors. It is, however, an act of very precious courtesy. Thus, having in the morning drunk a bottle and a half of Dry Monopole, I was privileged in the afternoon to be able to compare it with Pommery's 1884. This is the date of the last good champagne year. The cellarer (a gentleman of standing, for all his blue smock) has no doubt of your verdict as he pours the aromatic fluid into your glass. It is as clear as spring water, and the colour of a sulphur crystal. The bottles thus



opened for the tourist may, I suppose, be counted by the thousand annually. But it is enough to remember the historic ravaging of the cellars of M. Moët of Epernay during the Revolutionary wars to realise that good may come out of such apparent sacrifice. The Russians relieved M. Moët of about six hundred thousand bottles. That would of course have ruined a small man; but M. Moët could afford to wait; and soon after the war he found that he received twice as many orders from Russia as before. That immeasurable country continues to be a valued client both in Epernay and Rheims,—though it is not reputed to be the best of judges between genuine and fictitious champagne.

There are other names to conjure with here within sound of the bold bells of the cathedral besides Heidsieck and Pommery; but they need not be enumerated. They are at least as well known as the names of certain crowned heads of the Eastern hemisphere. Are they not on every wine list throughout the world, and have they not the agreeable consciousness that they are factors of innocent exhilaration in a thousand households every day in the year? That is the best of good champagne; it is absolutely harmless. Ere the year 1652, certain French physicians had conceived the idea that it might produce gout. This was a terrible charge. It of course affected the claim of the wine to its pre-eminence in the realm. In that year therefore a discussion was opened as to the superiority of champagne or burgundy. The learned doctors debated on the matter until five generations had passed away. In 1778, however, it was judicially decreed that champagne was the first wine in the world. As for the cruel charge brought against it, the *Maison Rustique*, already quoted, may again be relied upon for its information: "It is an error to suppose that champagne can give the gout. There is not a single gouty person in all the province; which is the best possible proof."

In the valley of the Marne the wine is annually toasted at meeting after meeting. It would be difficult to conceive an article of commerce more worthy of such attentions, or more able to inspire eloquence on behalf of itself. Apologists for it also continue to rise to their feet with the familiar long-bodied glasses in their hands, and to utter their warm protest against the mere idea that had entered the heads of the doctors of the last century. "I affirm in defiance of all doctors," said a gentleman in public only the other day at Ay, "that champagne is the wine of health itself, and that it is always on good terms with the man who drinks it, even though immoderately; that it has never occasioned a suicide [a sad hit at our old English habit of port drinking!]; that it agrees perfectly with the most delicate of stomachs; and that if it may sometimes have sent its votaries to sleep—an innocent crime—such slumber was full of sweet dreams and desirable visions!" It would be hard to surpass such eulogy.

One is prone to wonder if Joan of Arc indulged in champagne when she stayed here in 1429. That it was offered her there can be no reasonable doubt; but she may have had scruples, poor girl, which withheld her from the enjoyment of such material pleasures. Other remarkable visitors to Rheims were, however, deterred by no such scruples. King Wenceslaus of Bohemia is one of the most memorable of the willing victims of champagne. He came to Rheims in 1397, to contrive a treaty with the King of France; and when he had tasted the wine of Rheims he was so enamoured of it that he appeared likely never to terminate his diplomatic business. Day after day he intoxicated himself on champagne, and it seemed as if State affairs and his pleasures would keep him under the shadow of the great cathedral till he died. We may doubt if this monarch had much discrimination in what he drank. But probably the allurements of a debauch unattended by headaches

and remorse were as strong an attraction for him in Rheims as the bouquet of the wine itself.

In those days the best of good wine in France proceeded from the cellars of the different abbeys and monasteries; and no doubt it was the same here in Rheims. It is to the monks and their careful nursing of the wine that we owe the superb wines of our time. Chartreuse, Clos-Vougeot, and Chambertin are names that compel respect of a kind for monastic institutions, even from fanatics the most intolerant of the Church. One may readily imagine, therefore, that in Rheims, the seat of the highest Church dignitary of France, the cellars have never lacked good wine during about a millennium and a half.

Champagne is said to have reached its present degree of excellence at the time of the assassination of King Henry IV. in 1610. Ere then, however, the rulers of Europe had each possessed vineyards of their own on these bright slopes near the Marne; Henry VIII. of England, Pope Leo X., and Charles V. of Spain. We may suppose that even in those days certain tricks of adulteration and counterfeit were in vogue. It was much, therefore, to be assured of having a pure wine straight from the vineyards of Ay.

During the long reign of Louis XIII. champagne grew in appreciation. At the Court it doubtless witnessed many a scene that would have soured the spirit of a less generous wine. In the cellars of Pommery and Greno one is reminded of the revels of the Palais Royal by a certain impressive alto-relief chiselled in the chalk by a modern sculptor of Rheims. It represents a champagne feast of the eighteenth century, in which ladies and gentlemen, who might have stepped from one of Watteau's canvases, and goblets of wine are in very lively association. The light from above upon this respectable work of art makes the white figures stand forth in the half-gloom

with a convincing effect. From Louis the Great little in contempt of champagne was likely to proceed. In fact, it is said that he drank nothing but champagne until he was an old man. Then his physician thought well to advise burgundy in its stead. Two years later the King died. This too is of course an invincible testimony of the life-preserving as well as life-giving properties of the incomparable beverage. Every modern doctor of experience knows the value of champagne, and can tell of patients who have been kept alive upon it, and upon little else, for months or even years. Louis Quatorze was but one among the thousands who have leased existence from it.

According to the French, the great Napoleon, like the great Louis, was a staunch admirer and a constant drinker of champagne. But authorities differ as to whether or no it held the first place among beverages in his esteem. The poet Moore ascribes this honour to a wine of Burgundy:

Chambertin, which you know's the pet  
tipple of Nap.

It is well also to remember that after Waterloo, when we captured his travelling-carriage, two bottles were taken with it, containing respectively rum and malaga. However, even as a man has many other inclinations and appetites besides the master ambition of his soul, so Napoleon may have indulged in these meaner fluids without forswearing allegiance to champagne. Talleyrand, we know, termed champagne "the wine of civilisation, *par excellence*."

There is in short no end to the fine things that have been said about this simple straw-coloured fluid which seethes with such a cheerful murmur from its heavy bottle. Rheims may well be a proud little city. Its cathedral and its wine are matchless. With such credentials it can afford to be somewhat dull.

CHARLES EDWARDES.

## POLITICS AND INDUSTRY.

IN Europe there is at present no "military problem." There are, undoubtedly, discussions on the chances of war and on the degree of efficiency to which particular armies have attained, but there is no military problem in the sense in which there is an "industrial problem." In other words, there is no difference of opinion as to the relation of the army to the State. It is admitted on all sides that military efficiency is not to be left to chance, but is a thing that governments must attend to; and it is admitted that the State does not exist in order to keep up an army, but the army in order to preserve the State. Nor is it any longer necessary to devise means by which military efficiency may be rendered compatible with any type of political institutions. These are determined by the general political movement; while the type of military organisation is determined independently by military exigencies.

This was not always so. There have been times when it was necessary to prove by elaborate argument that if it has too little strength for war a nation cannot be sure of maintaining its existence. On the other side, too great military efficiency has presented itself as a danger to free institutions, and schemes have been worked out by political thinkers for combining freedom with the national strength which they saw to be necessary. Thus the question was not simply how to bring to bear the knowledge of experts on a public opinion that was in agreement about the end, but ignorant of the means. Theories as to the form military organisation should take were involved with disputed questions about the political structure of society. General ideas, arrived at by reasoning on facts accessible to every one, had

still a share in modifying the course of events. Partly by the influence of such general ideas, and partly by the conflict of forces, a solution capable of lasting for a time has been at length attained. Anything in advance of the present solution—any kind of international organisation, for example—now seems more out of the range of speculation than it did in the eighteenth century.

The cessation of the military problem as a question of general politics has been accompanied by the rise of the industrial problem. There have been times, of course, when there was no "industrial problem." A certain industrial system was accepted by every one, and all change that was introduced in it came about through unconscious processes; or, more exactly, through processes not determined by any conscious effort on the part of society to shape the industrial system as it ought to be. So far as there was any conscious collective effort, it was simply an effort to promote prosperity within the lines of the existing system. It need hardly be said that the present is not a time when this is all that is aimed at. The whole attitude of society or of the State towards industry has become a question for conscious deliberation. The question is not simply to find the means of attaining an end that is agreed upon. There is no agreement even as to the general form of the solution. This being so, the question is not one simply for experts. At its present stage, light may be thrown upon it by reasoning that proceeds on entirely general grounds; that is, without any reference to specific proposals.

The best means of throwing light upon the question in its general aspect

seems to be a classification of the chief possible solutions. There is at least a chance that the right solution may be arrived at by elimination of the wrong ones.

First, the solution known as *laissez faire* may be considered. The advocates of this solution may be most correctly described as industrial anarchists. In spite of disclaimers, this is the doctrine that furnishes the intellectual basis for nearly all attacks on "socialistic legislation." It is, perhaps, the first conscious attempt that has been made to solve the industrial problem. It owes its plausibility partly to the fact that it really embodies some truth, and partly to a confusion. The confusion consists in an identification of economical *laissez faire* with political freedom. The truth it contains is the clear conception of some results of the science known as political economy. When economists had shown that in particular kinds of commercial transaction, such as international trade, the country that does not interfere with the economical course of things will be the most prosperous commercially, it was an obvious practical inference that, whenever commercial prosperity is the thing desired, the State ought to let transactions of this particular kind alone. The *laissez faire* school drew the correct inference; but it proceeded to generalise it into a precept applicable at all times and places and to every kind of commercial and industrial transaction. No doubt exceptions were admitted, but they were admitted only as exceptions to a general rule. The line usually taken now is to go on admitting more and more exceptions, while yet continuing to maintain that the rule is true in its generality. Still this process, continued long enough, amounts to the rejection of *laissez faire* as a universal precept. By gradual concessions on the part of its practical defenders, it is being reduced to the position it was entitled to claim at first—that of a rule true in some particular cases. In

practice its application has been mitigated, both by survivals from an older state of things and by new modern legislation proceeding from motives not purely economical.

The type of society that consistent industrial anarchy tends to produce is the plutocratic; and its advocates are now mostly found among the friends of plutocracy. When no function of the State in relation to industry is recognised except that of clearing the ground for unlimited competition, the natural consequence is that everything is made subordinate to this kind of industrial struggle, and that those who are most proficient in it attain, together with wealth, the largest share of political power. With conscious or unconscious art, the industrial anarchists proclaim their cause to be that of individual freedom. Yet it is a fact that freedom, in its political sense, was understood and fought for long before the maxim of letting industry alone—whether right or wrong commercially—was heard of. And, when we look at the actual state of the case, the contradiction between individual freedom and regulation of industry by law is seen to be quite illusory. The operations of the greater industry—and this is what it is commonly proposed to regulate—are part of an immense and complicated mechanism where there is no room for really free contract in matters of detail between individual employers and workmen. The action of the mechanism, left to itself, is determined by the comparatively blind forces recognised in economics—love of gain and need of subsistence. State-intervention brings to bear upon it forces involving both more intelligence and more regard to ethical ends. By this means it sets the individual free, in a larger number of cases, to become more of an end for himself and less of an instrument for external ends. It thus increases the kind of freedom for which, according to one theory, the State exists.

Having dealt with the anarchical solution, we may proceed to deal with

its antithesis, the socialistic solution. This is to be distinguished here from what is called "socialistic legislation," or "State-socialism"; these being merely names applied to any mitigation of anarchy. Socialism, in its proper sense, must be taken to mean the actual conduct, by the central government or its subordinate governments and agents, of all industrial operations. It involves, of course, the substitution of collective for individual property. The purely economical argument against socialism is that it would be less efficient in producing wealth. Work done under the direct compulsion of social authority would be badly done; and absence of the hope that exists where there is room for competition would further depress all energies. When socialism is considered on more general grounds, the argument is urged that private property is essential to individual freedom. Neither of these arguments can really be answered. And the contention that genuine socialism is incompatible with individual freedom is completely confirmed by recent popular literature on the socialistic side. To these arguments it may be added, that socialism has in common with the opposite system the defect of regarding society too exclusively from the economical point of view. For the industrial anarchist, the State is there chiefly to make sure that the action of economical forces is not interfered with. If these by themselves tend to produce a certain type of society, all that remains for the individual is to adapt himself to it. Bringing other social forces into play is not to be thought of. The tendency of commercial competition is to become fiercer. Let us then consider the type that is most successful under fierce competition and try to become like that. Anything that will "pay" is as "liberal" as anything else if intelligently studied. Then let us study intelligently what will pay. On his side, the socialist would exact from everybody labour which could be proved before some social authority to be useful. And

such compulsion would be made practicable, and would be made to press on all alike (except perhaps the officials) by the absence of individual property and free contract. Thus, especially, all serious æsthetic pursuits would be rendered impossible (except perhaps when the favour of authority could be gained). For the socialist, the State exists first as an industrial mechanism, and all that is not industrial is a superfluous accompaniment of its working. In short, consistent socialism, when examined, turns out to be as soulless as plutocracy.

A solution different from either of those that have been discussed is accepted by Positivists and Catholics. This may be called the hierocratic solution. Private property is allowed, but its use is to be ordered in accordance with a uniform religious doctrine theoretically elaborated and applied to practice by a priesthood. Capital, according to the Positivists, is to be "moralised." That is to say, capitalists are to regulate the distribution of wealth in the interests of workmen. This could not be secured without some social power separate from the body of capitalists; and the power is found in a Church. A moral public opinion, practically irresistible by individuals, is to be formed and wielded by an organised "spiritual power" independent of the State. The solution recently propounded for the acceptance of Catholics does not differ from this essentially; though the theological doctrine of the Church in the two cases is of course not the same. One merit may be acknowledged in this solution. A wider view of society is taken than in the two others. All social activities are recognised, and not simply economical activity. On the other hand, they are recognised only to be controlled by the doctrine and discipline of a universal Church. No amount of material comfort diffused to any conceivable extent is worth this price. To permit either an old or a new Church to take the place claimed for it would involve the



suppression of intellectual liberty. Now intellectual liberty, whatever may be the aspirations of the "authoritative" schools, is not a mere incident of a "period of transition," but a permanent conquest of philosophic thought and of the development of the modern State.

The solution which remains to be considered, and which the course of the argument has gradually brought into view, is the doctrine of State-control or State-regulation of industry according to the best ideas and knowledge attainable at the time. This, in distinction from the others, may be called the political solution. It is untouched by any of the arguments that have been fatal to the rest. In essence, it is the doctrine that has been instinctively acted upon both in ancient and modern States. When a mistaken industrial policy was pursued in the past, this was not because the State failed to recognise the limits of its own general sphere of action, but

because it was ignorant of some particular law of economics. The remedy is not to exclude as many industrial questions as possible from the sphere of State-action, but to gain the most accurate knowledge of the conditions of particular problems and then to apply it both negatively and positively; and not simply for the maintenance of prosperity, but for the transformation of the industrial system itself. This does not imply State-ownership of all capital, which is the socialistic solution; but it implies that no limit shall be recognised to the action of the State upon industry except the knowledge that action would be injurious to the Commonwealth. Where there is doubt there may be action or abstinence from action according to the probabilities of the case. At a time like the present, when the industrial system is comparatively plastic, the bias ought to be in favour of action.

THOMAS WHITTAKER.

## A LONDON ROSE.

DIANA, take this London rose,  
 Of crimson grace for your pale hand,  
 Who love all loveliness that grows :  
 A London rose—ah, no one knows,  
 A penny bought it in the Strand !

But not alone for heart's delight ;  
 The red has yet a deeper stain  
 For your kind eyes that, late by night,  
 Grew sad at London's motley sight  
 Beneath the gaslit driving rain.

And now again I fear you start  
 To find that sorry comedy  
 Re-written on a rose's heart :  
 'Tis yours alone to read apart,  
 Who have such eyes to weep and see.

Soon rose and rhyme must die forgot,  
 But this, Diana —ah, who knows !—  
 May die, yet live on in your thought  
 Of London's fate, and his who bought  
 For love of you a London rose.

ERNEST RHYS.

## THE FOUR STUDENTS.

A BARE attic room ; on a wooden table one candle only in a wooden candlestick, and the candle was in snuff. Raynaud paused in his reading for the bad light, and Gavaudun snuffed the wick with his fingers. Then they all remained for a moment pensive, listening to the sounds of the night. For the wind had arisen again, and the leaded windows rattled ; and from below came the monotonous low groan of the street lamp swaying to and fro upon its chain. The room, which the four students shared in common, contained little else save their four truckle-beds, beside each of which stood a pail for washing purposes. There were four chairs and the wooden table, round three sides of which they were sitting, close against the fire, for the night was bitterly cold. Blank darkness looked in upon them through the two lattice windows, which had neither shutter nor blind. The house had once been a hotel standing in its own grounds, but was now compressed into the Rue Pot-de-Fer, close to the corner where that street ran into the Rue des Postes. It lay in the quarter much frequented by Parisian students, just outside that densely packed district known in those days as l'Université. At the end of their street, beyond its junction with the Rue des Postes and at the end of the Rue des Postes itself, stood two of the thousand barriers which shut in Paris proper.

It was in the winter of 1787. The world without, though these four recked little of it, was in a ferment, nominally because the King's Minister, Loménie de Brienne, was at loggerheads with the Parliament of Paris ; really because the times were big with much greater issues which no man then foresaw.

The wind softened a little, the win-

dows rattled less, and Raynaud took up his book again. It was a book which he had bought that day off a stall on the Petit Pont. Le Bossu du Petit Pont, as the keeper of the stall was called, was a familiar figure to most of the students of that quarter. On examination it proved to be the work *De Invocatione Spirituum*, by Johannes Moguntiensis, or John of Menz ; a man whom Cornelius Agrippa speaks of several times in his *Philosophia Occulta*, and in his familiar letters, as having been in some sort his master. Raynaud read on, and the others, —Sommarel, Gavaudun, Tourret—listened rather languidly to the Latin of the magician, as he set forth the processes by which might be formed between two, three, or four persons (but best of all if they were four) a mystic chain so called, "each one with the others," and how the supernal powers were to be conjured to aid the work. The author was at once prolix and obscure ; and none of the four, not even the reader, paid strict attention to his words.

"But, hold !" said Tourret ; "what did you say ? *In Vigila Nativitatis*—why it is precisely the Eve of Noel that we are in to-night."

"And so it is ! If we were to try the charm ?" said Gavaudun.

"Excellent ! we will do so."

"John of Menz come to our aid !" said Sommarel, folding his hands.

"Tush ! You don't invoke John of Menz," said Gavaudun. "Let me see, whom have we got to call upon ?"

"Oh, *Diabolus*, I suppose, or the *Anima Mundi*, the Soul of the World," said Tourret.

"Nonsense," said Gavaudun, who had taken up the book.

Glad of a little change they all rose up. "We have to inscribe a pentacle, the Pentacle of Mars, on the floor."

said Raynaud. "Then prick our arms and transfer the blood from one vein to another, he directs."

"No, you say the incantation or conjuration first," said Gavaudun, as he turned back to an earlier page. As he did so a sort of tune seemed to be running in his head. They scratched the pentacle on the floor with a rusty iron nail, and each took his stand in one of the angles. Then Gavaudun shouted out the conjuration:—"I conjure and require you,—Ja, Pa, Asmodai, Aleph, Beleph, Adonai, Gormo, Mormo, Sadaï, Galzael, Asrael, Tangon, Mangon, Porphrael!" It was not precisely thus that the words were written; but they seemed to come out of his mouth in this sort of chant; and all the four took it up and sang, "Galzael, Asrael, Tangon, Mangon, Porphrael!" till the roof echoed. Then they stopped suddenly and stared at one another. They were all in a sweat; but each one laughed. Of course that was part of the joke; the other three had been roaring like that for a joke, but each one felt that for himself the chanting had been a mere contagion, had come out of him without his will.

"*O vos omnes, spiritus terreni, invocamus et convocamus vos!* Ye spirits of the earth, we call and conjure you! Be ye our aiders and confederates, and fulfil whatever we demand!" Gavaudun with a solemn mien pronounced this prayer. "Now for the drop of blood!" And he turned round to the table to re-read the passage of John of Menz. He seemed to take the lead now, while Raynaud did everything in a reluctant, half-mechanical way as one walking in his sleep. They had all been sitting without their coats, as the custom was in those days; two in loose dressing-gowns, one in a light jacket, and one in shirt sleeves. As they stood in the pentacle they took off these outer garments, or turned up the sleeves of them to bare their arms. Each one made with his pen-knife or stiletto a small incision in his arm, a little blood

was squeezed out, according to the prescription, and exchanged against a drop of blood from his neighbour's arm, which, as well as it might be, was conducted into the wound made to receive it. It took time; for each one had to make the exchange with his neighbour; each had to make two pricks upon his arm, for only so could he be sure that he had not squeezed out again the foreign blood just imported.

"Quick!" said Sommarel. "It is near twelve, and the whole must be done on the Eve of the Nativity."

"There ought to be five of us," said Tourret, "to fill all the five angles."

"No; it specially says not more than four. I suppose the Terrestrial Spirit, whose names we have been reciting, fills up the fifth angle."

"Why Raynaud and I have not exchanged yet," said Gavaudun, as the others held out their hands to complete the mystic circle.

"*Bon Dieu*, we cannot wait any longer. You see it is just twelve."

They linked hands and shouted once more in chorus and to the self-same chant: "Ja, Pa, Asmodai, Aleph, Beleph, Adonai, Gormo, Mormo, Sadaï," and the rest. Louder and louder they called, the sweat pouring down their foreheads. A wanderer of the night, supperless in the bitter cold, looked up at their windows which shone like a high beacon, heard the shout, and in his heart cursed those jovial revellers as he supposed them to be. Then from the neighbouring church of St. Geneviève rang over the compact mass of roofs the first notes of the clock, and next a chime of bells. Raynaud tore his hands from the others; a look of terror was in his face.

"That was famous!" said Sommarel, bursting into a laugh.

## II.

THIS room in the Ru Pot-de-Fe was for the four students no more than an inn on the high road of life. In six

months they had separated again, and gone their different ways. It was now nearly six years since they had lived together in that room. Gavaudun had left Paris to become a professor at Lille, and, young as he still was, was a man already distinguished. On the capture of Lille he had become an Austrian subject, and had left Revolutionary France for ever. Sommarel was practising the law in his native town. Tourret had married a rich wife and had disappeared from ken. Only Raynaud remained behind in the old room.

Since the four had parted the Revolution had begun, and had marched along its appointed way. At first Raynaud had taken his share in all the excitement of the time. He had been among the crowd when the Bastille fell. He had followed the procession of women to Versailles, and seen the King carried to Paris in triumph. But during the last two years all energy seemed to have ebbed from him ; and a fantastic pageant of events had passed him, he himself taking no part in what was going forward, scarcely even heeding it. Time after time the faubourg of St. Marcel hard by had risen in black wrath, had flowed out in its thousands to meet St. Antoine, to meet the Marseillais volunteers, to whirl and eddy round the Tuileries and the Hall of the National Convention ; or had gone forth in frantic joy to take part in I know not what Feast of the Revolution, Feast of Reason, Fraternal Supper, as the occasion might be ; and had flowed back again, neither the better nor the worse in its every day life for all its wild exhibitions of rage and hope. Over all this Raynaud looked from his high citadel as if he had no concern in these terrene matters. But his indifference was not born of philosophy, only of a strange dulness which he could not shake off.

He had remained the constant inhabitant of the same room. But not always its sole occupant. A succession of persons had lain upon one or other of the three tressel-beds left vacant by

Gavaudun, Sommarel, and Tourret ; a strange procession of beings emblematical of the times : esurient lawyers from the provinces ; disrobed *abbés* much given to cards ; Jews come to deal, if it might be, in assignats and the *domaines nationaux*. Nor were the lighter occupations of life unrepresented in these grim times. Not long since three players from the Théâtre de Lyons had been his room-fellows. One of them had got an engagement at the Théâtre Français in the Rue de Bondi ; the other two had come up to bear him company, and look out for work and play. The last co-occupant of the room had called himself a composer. People said that he was in reality a Royalist agent, and he had been haled to the guillotine. Nay, but he was a composer, whatever else he might be ; for his companion had one or two fragments of songs set to music by him which he had left behind in his hurry. Raynaud was now left in his ancient room alone ; he himself was under the protection of Citizen Fourmisson, formerly barber, now member of the Tribunal Criminel Révolutionnaire, who lived in the better apartments below, and whose children Raynaud taught. But it was best to keep one's self to one's self in these suspicious days ; and at that moment Raynaud reckoned not a single friend in Paris.

Life had not gone well with him. He was thinking this as, one winter afternoon, he returned to his room after giving his accustomed lesson on the floor below, and in spite of the cold stood for a moment gazing out from his window over the view of plots and cottages and distant woods which it showed. The houses and cottages had become more frequent, the patches of land fewer, during the last six years ; for the faubourg had grown considerably. Raynaud noticed this much ; he knew nothing about the changes in the rest of Paris. During the last three years he had never once crossed the river. He knew nothing of the changed appearance of the Quai de



Grève since the conflagration, nothing of the new names which had been bestowed upon the parts of Paris near the Tuileries. Above all he had never been to the Place de la Révolution, nor seen the altar raised to the new patron saint of the City of Paris, la Sainte Guillotine. Certainly this indifference to the growth of the Republic, One and Indivisible, was in itself a thing suspect. But Citizen Fourmisson had his reasons for wishing to retain the services of the dreamy young tutor.

No ; life had not gone well with him. Citizen Fourmisson paid his salary chiefly in the protection which his august name afforded. What Raynaud lived upon was a pittance due to him from his brother Gilbert, who cultivated the few patrimonial acres of Les Colombiers. "Why do I linger on here?" Raynaud thought, or half-thought. "What value is protection to a life so colourless as mine?" But then he realised that if he did talk of going, Fourmisson would without doubt denounce him at once. He thought of his last chamber-companion Briçonnet, the musician, the only one with whom he had made any sort of friendship ; of the knocking which had mingled with Raynaud's dreams on that morning when the *sergents de ville* came to carry the poor composer off to the Luxembourg hard by ; of the man's white face when he awoke, of how he had clutched at the bedstead and screamed to Raynaud to come to his help. The sergeants had searched everywhere, had ripped open the bed, but so far as Raynaud could see they had found nothing but scores of music. Most of the music they had carried away, but some scattered sheets remained. One contained the setting of a song by the unhappy Berthier de Saint Maur, who had been before then as little known to Raynaud as he was for long after to the English reader until, not long since, a critic unearthed him and translated some of his songs. It was a verse from the song of *Le Pèlerin* which was running in Raynaud's head now :

Alone, alone, no mortal thing so much  
Alone ! The eagle captured from the hills ;  
The solitary *chouan* when he fills  
The air with discord ; the cast mariner,  
What time the spar parts from his frozen  
clutch,  
Are not so lone as I,—ah no, sweet sir !

Raynaud even tried to sing the tune, as he had heard Briçonnet sing it. Singing was not in his way ; he got nowhere near the air ; rather the words came out in an unearthly chant.

Then, suddenly, he was brought back to the scene in this very room, six years before, when he and the three others had chanted together a magic formula out of a book by,—by,—he forgot the name. The whole scene rose before his eyes ; then faded as quickly. No ; his life had not gone well since then. He had in those ambitious student days (he had always passed then for the cleverest of the four) planned that great work on the *Comité des Nations*, an extension of the doctrine of the social contract into the domain of national law. It was to inaugurate a new era. The plan of the book and its very name were identical with those of the work which Gavaudun had actually published in these years ; and which even in the times in which they lived had made him famous. Had Gavaudun taken his idea ? Had he, Raynaud, left much on record ? Had he expounded it fully in those days ? He could not remember now ; but he thought he had drawn it all out later. Yet it could not be so ; Gavaudun must have stolen the thought from him. But his spirits felt too dulled to allow of his feeling active resentment even for such a piece of plagiarism as that.

Then Turret ; that was stranger still. Turret had acted out in real life what had been Raynaud's dream. He had almost from boyhood had that romance in his mind. How he was to be riding along the dangerous way where the main road to Tours branches off from the Orleans road, there where

the disused water-mill peeps out from among the trees,—that mill was always thought to be a rendezvous for foot-pads; how he was to overhear the two men planning the seizure of an approaching vehicle, was to ride past them receiving a shot through his hat (he remembered all the details), was to meet the coach in which sat an old father and a beautiful young daughter, to ride up (in imminent danger again of being shot) and give them warning. Alas, too late, for here are the two upon us! But the old father fires, he, Raynaud, fires, and the two rogues fall. But what if more are coming? So he offers his own horse to the father, and the daughter rides on pillion behind, Raynaud and the coachman driving after at the best rate they can make. The result, the eternal gratitude of the father and his, Raynaud's, ultimate marriage to the beautiful heiress. Such had been Raynaud's romance, elaborated in every detail. And three years ago it had fallen to Tourret actually to do this thing! The robbers from whom Tourret saved his future father-in-law were not common highwaymen, but two from the terrible band of the *chauffeurs*, wherefore his heroism had been the greater. Tourret had married the heiress, and had, it was thought, at the beginning of the troubles found his way out of France to Switzerland.

No; not well. And last night he had dreamt that a great treasure had been found on the farm at Les Colombiers. The dream was so vivid that even after he woke he had been speculating what he should do with the money, what new life he should lead. But now that his thoughts had run back into their accustomed sombre channel he saw things in a different light. He professed to be an enlightened thinker; but no small measure of rustic superstition lingered in his mind. Dreaming of a treasure he knew was reckoned a bad omen. Who knows what it might portend?

Musing of all these things Raynaud descended to take his walk. As he

passed along the passage at the bottom of the house the *concierge* stopped him with the familiar and, as we should call it, insolent action which one citizen used to another in those days, and always emphasised if he had to do with a man better born and better educated than himself.

"A despatch for you, citizen," he said.

The lower floor of this old hotel was now a wine-shop, and the two or three men in the room were grouped together examining a rather official-looking envelope bound round with a cord and sealed with black wax.

"Here is the citizen for the letter," said the *concierge*; and the man who was actually holding it handed the envelope to the porter without apology and without rising. "Good luck to the citizen with his letter," he said, turning back to the table to take up his glass.

The others laughed a little, and all eyed Raynaud rather curiously as he broke the seals. The idea of Government was in those days almost synonymous with the idea of Death. Therefore even an envelope with an official seal upon it, especially if the seal were black, suggested the vague possibility either that the citizen who received it was going to be guillotined himself, or else that one of his relatives had been—not here in Paris, perhaps, but down in the country.

Raynaud with the thoughts that had been running in his head could not help turning pale as he opened the letter. But it proved to be of a very inoffensive character, though for some reason the Bureau of Police had thought fit to open and read it and seal it up again in this official manner. It was from Raynaud's brother Gilbert. "My dear brother," he wrote. "The agriculture marches very ill here, no doubt in great measure because of the plots of Pitt and of the enemies of the Republic; but also because the workmen work not very willingly and there are not enough *métayers* to be found. It has happened that my brother-in-law Emile

Plaidoyer has lately died. Wherefore my father-in-law writes to offer me to work with him upon his farm of Guibrauche in Plessis-le-Pèlerin, where he prospers better than I. Now precisely at this moment comes an offer from Maistre Sommarel of Tours to buy Les Colombiers. He offers a good price for it, seven thousand livres. Wherefore if thou consent, my dear brother, the bargain shall be made and the instruments drawn up. D.G. Thy brother, Gilbert." D.G. was the nearest that those who still possessed religion dared put for the ordinary salutation, *Dieu te garde*.

Curious; Raynaud's dream of last night come true, after a fashion! Only unhappily the treasure of which the dream spoke was diminished to this miserable sum of seven thousand livres, of which only the moiety would come to him. That at any rate was worth having. To-morrow he would write to Gilbert authorising him to complete the sale. With that he issued into the street.

### III.

THERE was very little variety in Raynaud's walks. They took place at the same time, that is at the completion of his afternoon's lessons with his pupils, and therefore at this winter season just about the hour of dusk. They never extended outside a short radius from his lodging, and generally comprised some sort of a circle round Mount St. Geneviève. Up the Rue des Postes, the Rue Neuve St. Geneviève, down the Rue Mouffetard, the Rue Bordet, till he reached the Place du Panthéon; this was his route to-day. He extracted a certain dull pleasure from the sight of these familiar streets growing dusky in the gathering night. They made an image for him of the fading of all things, all worldly ambitions and troubles into the same dull twilight of the tomb; an image or half-image, for his thoughts themselves had grown dim and as it were muffled in his brain.

But to-night he was roused up a

little, cheered by the letter which he had got from Gilbert. "Maistre Sommarel, Sommarel," he said to himself, as he reviewed the letter in his mind. "Likely enough that is my old comrade Sommarel. He was a Tourrainais like myself; I know that. Everything seems to bring back those days to me this evening." The scene of their last Christmas Eve came once more distinctly before his mind. "And, *par Dieu!*" he thought to himself, "if this is not also Christmas Eve!" The Christian religion had been abolished, and the months and the days of the month had been changed; so that it took Raynaud a minute to remember that this, the fourth of Nivose, was in "slave-style" the twenty-fourth of December. But, as he walked, the words of the old incantation came back to him, and under his breath he kept on humming, to the self-same chant that they had used, the meaningless invocation,—*"Ja, Pa, Asmodai, Aleph, Beleph, Adonai, Gormo, Mormo, Sadaï!"* It was sad nonsense.

At this moment he was passing along the little street of St. Étienne des Grés, near the church of that name. He vaguely remembered that some years before some antiquarian studies which he had been making on pre-Roman Paris and its neighbourhood had given him a special interest in the site of this little church of St. Étienne; and that he had always meant to go into it, but had never done so. Since then he had forgotten his wish. He had no doubt passed the insignificant building a hundred times in his walks, but had never thought of entering. Religion had now been abolished, and the churches were all closed. Raynaud presumed so at least, but he thought he might at any rate try this one. He found to his surprise that the handle would turn,—after an effort, rustily. The door swung complainingly open and he went in.

The place had not been used for a year. It was colder than the tomb.

Spiders and dust in partnership had hung ropes from pillar to pillar; rats had been busy with the woodwork; a bat or two had found its way through a broken pane in the windows and built nests in the organ-loft and the rood-screen. Raynaud walked forward towards the apse in whose windows the light was beginning to fade. What a pity that he had not happened to have looked up his old notes, so as to know why he had once specially wished to stand inside this church of St. Étienne des Grés. But how curious that he should have so utterly forgotten those antiquarian studies of three years gone, and that they should come back to him now. Quite a flood of things seemed to be coming back to him. Was he in a dream now, or had he been in one through these last three years? Only give him time and he would remember everything.

"I am," it said.

*It* said—what said? Raynaud could have sworn that no one spoke. And yet there again, "I am and I was;" and it was as if the air laughed silently. "Who are you?" he cried. But there was no answer, and he expected none. For he knew that he had heard no sound.

Then he gave a sudden start, and his heart beat against his ribs, and the sweat gathered on his forehead. For almost as if in answer to his invocation there came a sound from far off, a sound of footsteps drawing nearer and nearer. Raynaud cowered down, suddenly unnerved; and yet there was nothing supernatural in what he heard. The steps came nearer and nearer, and a crowd of men and women (passing by chance that way from a day spent in the Place de la Révolution) burst into the church,—figures not to be seen to-day save in a nightmare: haggard, long-toothed women with black hair or grey, tangled and lank, streaming down beside their cheeks; blear-eyed men, drunk, not with wine, but with a new intoxica-

tion to which men had not yet given a name, the intoxication of blood. They had come that way by chance, and seeing the church-door open had run in. But as they advanced up the aisle their step changed into a dance. They caught hold of one another and danced up the aisle, up to the chancel, up to the altar itself, throwing up their feet, their arms, clasping one another, whirling and whirling round. They shook the rood-screen, shook down ropes of cobwebs from the high roof, shook the organ-loft, till the organ itself emitted a dull sound, half-groan, half-wail. Then they danced out, and silence, as ghost-like as before, fell on the deserted church. But the dance which had seized upon them there went with them out into the street. It was caught up by others and grew, and grew into a wild infection, a Dance of Death. It was called the Carmagnole.

Raynaud was left once more alone. And again the Air spake: "Swaying and whirling," it said, "whirling and swaying;" and then again, "I did it;" and once again the Silence laughed.

Raynaud could bear it no longer, and he cried out in a tone which surprised even himself,—*"Speak! Who are you? I command you to speak!"* But there was no answer.

Then it was as if a wind blew through the church, and, yes, Raynaud heard the rustling of boughs above, and it seemed as if the moon were struggling to shine through branches far overhead. It was but a momentary vision; again he was alone in the church, and grey evening was changing into night.

"Ye Spirits of the Earth," said Raynaud half mechanically, as the old conjuration came into his head; "I call and conjure you! Be ye my aiders and confederates, and fulfil whatsoever I demand!"

"I am and I was," said the voiceless Voice, and laughed again. But Raynaud no longer wondered what it meant, for the voice was within him.

## IV.

IN the morning, long before dawn, Raynaud left his lodging. The porter was nodding by the door, and one man was asleep in the wine-shop with his head upon the table and a candle guttering in its iron saucer close beside him, sending forth much smoke and an evil smell. Raynaud undid the fastenings of the door softly and stole out. A bitter wind met him; some moist snow was lying thinly between the cobble-stones, and a few flakes were still falling. He passed with quick footsteps down the echoing Rue des Postes into the Rue St. Jacques, down and down, to places he had not trodden for years, over the Petit Pont into the Cité, and thence to the north side of the river. It was years since he had been there, and many things were new to him. The Quai de la Grève had been reconstructed since the conflagration; the last building on the Petit Pont had fallen. But Raynaud paid little heed to these things, nor yet to the river which he had not seen for so long, nor to the numberless barges laden chiefly with wood which lay upon the stream, nor the piles of wood all along its southern bank. From the Quai de la Grève he passed along the Quai de la Mégisserie, then along the Quai du Louvre, the Quai des Tuileries, until finally the Quai du Conférence brought him to the goal of his steps, the Place de la Révolution.

The Place was never free from loiterers night or day. Bitter as was the morning many were there now, sitting upon the steps which led up to the terrace of the Tuileries. In the faint moonlight they looked more like black shadows than men. For a moon far gone in the wane gleamed faintly over the trees to the north of the Place. And now, from where Raynaud paused for a moment to look about him, an object which he had never seen before stood between him and the moon, a square open scaffolding mounted upon a sort of rostrum. It

was the guillotine! All round the rostrum hung a little group of men. There were some guards between them and the erection itself, but not many, and they did not exercise their authority with much vigour to keep men from perching themselves upon the lower posts and under the bars of the construction. Raynaud without further pause pushed straight for this crowd, and tried to elbow his way as near as might be to the guillotine. His dress was undistinguished from that of any other member of the crowd. He wore a rough black coat of a sort of shag or frieze, black breeches of the same material. His waistcoat was red, with a blue and white stripe across it; his feet were shod with *sabots*, and he wore a red cotton nightcap on his head. That was the safest dress for any man to wear in those times. When however Raynaud set to work to elbow his way too pertinaciously to a good place near the guillotine, the crowd began to murmur, and as their eyes lighted upon his delicate white hands they began to bandy jests upon him in which an ear accustomed to the times would have recognised danger.

"It is well to be a good patriot, citizen," said a little man standing beside a large fat woman; "but let others be good patriots too." "'*Cré nom, oui*," growled another. "Some come to *la mère* for one thing, some for another," said the fat woman enigmatically. "The citizen has not come expecting to meet a friend, *par exemple?*" said a fourth speaker, setting himself directly in Raynaud's way. "Not a *ci-devant*, for instance?" "Not come to pay respects to the head of his family?" "*Ou bien à la chef de la chef de sa famille*," said a dullard, thinking that he had seen the pun for the first time and laughing heavily at his own wit. "*Bon jour, monsieur! monsieur!! monsieur!!!*" cried many voices in which shrill ones predominated, after Raynaud, who despite of all, and apparently not knowing what was said to him, had pushed and squeezed his way some yards nearer



the machine. He was just at the corner of the scaffold. He contrived to settle himself on one of its underbeams in a sort of squatting attitude which rested him a little, and there he remained quiet and awaited the day. Some of the citizens who had joined in the gibes upon him continued for a while to growl threateningly. Then something else attracted their attention and they left him in peace.

It was bitterly cold, though nobody seemed very sensible of it. Now and then flakes of snow still drifted lazily through the air. The moonlight faded in the sky, and the grey sad face of dawn began to look forth through the curtains of the east. At last she blushed a little; and between two black bars, like the bars of a prison-window, the sun himself shot a beam or two across the world.

By this time the Place de la Révolution was densely packed. Almost immediately after the sunrise there arose from all the mass a great sigh of satisfaction which shaped itself into the words "*On vient—on vient—they are coming!*" Then a regiment of soldiers marched up and formed round the scaffold. The crowd swayed backwards, crushing and swearing. Raynaud seemed to be unaware of what was going on till a soldier rather roughly pulled him from his seat and threw him forwards into the crowd. The people, who had jeered at him before, laughed and began to jeer at him again. But now a cruel sound was heard in the distance, the roar of an angry multitude. The excitement round the guillotine grew keener every moment; people pushed and swore and tried to raise themselves above their neighbours. One tall man who held a six-year-old child upon his shoulders was very conspicuous.

At the first sound of the distant roar Raynaud had raised his head; an eager light shone in his eyes as if he was listening to catch some definite words, and presently his own mouth opened and gave forth in a monotonous chant the old invocation: "Ja,

Pa, Adonai, Aleph, Beleph, Asmodai. . . ."

"What is he saying? He is mad," said the citizens immediately round him, eyeing him askance. "He is giving a signal; it is a plot," said another. His life at that moment hung upon a thread; but he wist not of it.

The roar had been deepening all this time. Every throat in the Place de la Révolution began to take up the cries, which had been running like flame down the streets and quays. "*A bas les tyrans!*" was the usual cry, alternating here and there with "*Vive la guillotine!*" "*Vive la République!*" Some people gave a lyrical turn to the noise by chanting a stanza of the Marseillaise—"*Aux armes, citoyens! . . .*"

The first tumbril reached the scaffold, which the executioner mounted the moment after, greeted by vehement cries of "*Vive Samson!*" and the process of reading out the names began, which to any one but those quite close to the performers seemed like an inexplicable dumb show. With his eyes almost bursting from his head with wild excitement Raynaud pushed and squeezed and sweated to get nearer still to the fatal engine. For now the first bound figure was brought forward and laid face downwards upon the block. Suddenly the noise in the crowd died down, and men held their breaths to watch the final act of this man's life-comedy. There was always a special interest felt in the first execution of each day. Men made bets upon it; whether the head would leap off straight into the sack, or whether it would just touch the woodwork first, and so forth. What is stranger still, the superstitious drew auguries from this event; as if the world (which in the Place de la Révolution it had done) had rolled two thousand years backwards in its course.

Raynaud was one of the very few in the crowd who beheld an execution for the first time. His heart stood still, but not with fear, to wait for the

sound of the descending steel. And then — then it came. Men spoke often in those days of the executed man sneezing in the sack of sawdust. It was not merely a fanciful metaphor. The truth is that the sound which Raynaud's ears now heard for the first time had some grim resemblance to a sneeze. It was made partly by the swift hiss of the descending steel, checked for a moment as it shore through the victim's neck, partly by the head falling into the sack of sawdust, partly by the gush of the blood rushing forth when the head was severed. Such was the sound which followed the moment's pause of the listening crowd, and which Raynaud heard for the first time. And as he heard it the blood coursed again through his veins, his eye glistened with a preternatural brightness, and he seemed to drink in new life.

The day wore on ; Raynaud had eaten nothing since the previous night, but he seemed to feel no hunger. One after another the tumbrils discharged their burdens and the bloody sacrifice went on. Sacrifice ! yes, that was the word which flashed into his mind. A sacrifice to whom or what ? An answer to that too seemed to lie somewhere in the back of his thoughts, but he could not seize it then. The crowd around him, which had been formerly so suspicious, could not help being struck by his look of exultation, and repented itself of its suspicions. And one man, who had not been noticed before, with a dark face and a peculiarly acute cast of countenance, was so pleased that he placed his hand on Raynaud's shoulder with the usual compliment, " I see you are a good patriot, citizen ! "

At length the last cart had been emptied and a blankness fell over Raynaud's soul. It was again dark. Quickly the crowd began to disperse, not without wild cries and fraternal embraces and dancing of the new *carmagnole*. The acute-faced man came up and spoke to Raynaud, who listened as if he understood, but understood nothing. The other gave

him a piece of his bread and a fragment of sausage. Then they nodded and exchanged " good-night," and Raynaud walked away.

## V.

RAYNAUD passed again along the quays and over the Petit Pont towards his home. Suddenly he found himself once more in the little church of St. Étienne des Grés. The day had been long gone, and it was colder than ever. But the night was clear, and the starlight stole in, muffled and shadowy, through the east window of the church.

Through the east window,—but why did the groining of the window seem to shake and sway from side to side ? Why did the air blow so cold through the church ? There was an answer to this, Raynaud knew, but could not lay hold of it. From the organ-loft (if it was an organ-loft) came a sad sound like that which the wind makes through pine trees. Raynaud looked and looked into the recesses — of what ? — the church ? Nay ; but they stretched far beyond the limits of the church. It was as if he were in the midst of a vast forest. Dim star-lit stems seemed to catch his eye from far distances girt round by shadow ; and now over his head boughs were certainly waving to and fro.

Then a wild sort of half-chant filled his ears, wild but very faint. He could dimly fancy he caught the voices of his old comrades, Gavaudun, Sommarel, Tourret, in it ; at any rate the chant brought them in some way into his mind. And the sound grew nearer and nearer, wilder and harsher. Figures came in sight, fierce in gesture, with unkempt locks streaming down their faces, clad in skins, brandishing spears on high, marching or dancing forward in a strange dance. Then there was a crashing among the branches and heavy wheeled carts rumbled into sight, each drawn by two bullocks. Beside them walked men in white apparel, with fillets round their

hair. The carts were full of men and women, who all had their hands bound behind them, in some cases bound so tightly that the withies had cut through the flesh and a streak of blood trickled downwards over their hands. Some opened their mouths from time to time, but whether to sigh or cry out Raynaud could not tell, for the shouting and screaming of the crowd would have drowned their voices. And now, as each cart came to the stopping-place, the bound men were one by one brought down, a white-robed priest plunged a knife into each one's heart, and the blood flowed out upon the ground. The cries and chanting grew louder and louder; people danced in ecstasy round the pool of blood, which was swelling almost into a rivulet, and flowed away among the trees. Then, as suddenly as it had begun, it all ceased; and Raynaud saw the dark church round him with a faint light struggling in through the window. And within him the silent Voice spoke,—“I am the spirit of the place. I did it. Two thousand years ago, and yesterday and——” Thereupon the whole air seemed to be filled with pale faces of slaughtered victims, who moved round as in a procession. Raynaud saw at last the faces of his three old comrades of the Rue Pot-de-Fer following one after the other, and at the end of all a fourth face,—his own!

## VI.

HE returned to his lodging. Citoyenne Fourmisson met him on his way to his room, and poured upon him a torrent of abuse and threats. But he only stared at her and passed on. What had that past life to do with him now? The world had begun to live anew, and all the new life was coursing through his veins. Fourmisson was away; he had been sent with Tallien to sharpen the sword of the Revolutionary Committee at Bordeaux and stamp out the last embers of Girondinism.

The next morning, and the next, and the next, Raynaud was in his old place beside the scaffolding of the guillotine. Each day he encountered his friend of the first occasion; sometimes these two walked part of the way home together. The acute-faced one was full of statistics: of how many could be executed by one “machinist” in a single day; of what work had been done by a rival machine in the Champ de Mars; of work that was being done in the provinces. One evening, after a modest dinner together, he took Raynaud into another church he had never been in before. It too was in the neighbourhood of Mont de Geneviève. It was a huge church, this, not like that of St. Étienne de Grès disused and empty, but crammed with—worshippers shall we say?—yes, worshippers of a sort. The same wild feeling of exultation that he had felt first in St. Étienne and again by the guillotine, seized the student now, as he came among these cloisters and looked along the sea of red caps and dark unwashed faces which the place contained. Many were smoking; a hot thick atmosphere rose from the standing throng, and behind it danced a sea of faces which crowded the amphitheatre of benches in the nave and reached almost to the roof of the church. Raynaud had seen long since a print from some picture by an Italian master in which tiers and tiers of angels, all bearing instruments of music in their hands, rose one above the other as to the roof of heaven. These were not the faces of angels; nor was it like sweet music the sound which came from their throats when the speaker in a high tribune paused in his oration. This place was the debating-hall of the Société des Amis de la Liberté; and the church was the church of the Convent of the Jacobins.

As his friend spoke to this man and that, helping him forward, Raynaud felt the last traces of his old dullness and indifference fall off him like a cast garment. The whole assembly

was but an instrument to be played upon—and a vision of the rat-riddled organ of St. Étienne flashed through his mind; he would make it sound what tune he chose. He was not therefore the least surprised to find himself presently in the tribune. The motion before the society was not of much importance, merely one for the expulsion of one Legrand who, his enemies pointed out, had been once the signatory of an *arrêt* in favour of the “traitor” Lafayette. Such an act of expulsion would have been of course only the first stage on the road to the guillotine; but in the case of a single individual, of what consequence was that? What Raynaud said upon the motion was, like most of the other speeches, pretty wide of the subject in hand. But his peroration stirred the audience to frenzy. “Our duty,” he cried, and it was as if a sonorous voice not his own had been lodged within him, “our duty, the duty of France, is to purify the whole world; and that can only be done by blood, and more blood, by blood ever and always!” And when he ended, the human organ round him swelled into such a diapason of rough-throated applause as had never been heard in that church before.

Raynaud became a celebrity. He was placed upon the Revolutionary Committee, and the work of that body went forward ever more rapidly under the inspiration of his zeal. He seemed to require no rest nor food, and whenever he was not occupied upon the tribunal he was sure to be seen in a cart by the guillotine, or on the scaffold itself, superintending the execution of its victims. In those days he carried a motion that the sittings of his tribunal should not begin till the afternoon, but should be prolonged, if needful, into the night; for the work of Samson and his colleagues was generally over before four. Great was the increase in the rapidity of work at the tribunals, and the growth of the *fournées*,—the batches of men who wended daily to the Place. It

was through the motion of Raynaud that eventually a third guillotine was set up at the edge of the Faubourg St. Marcel, on his side of the river, nearer still to that site of the old grove of sacrifice where now stood St. Étienne des Grés.

But there were days of pause. On the *decadis*, for example, the present substitutes for Sunday, no work was done; no prisoners were executed on that day. And on such days Raynaud would sit quietly at home over his books, the gentlest citizen in Paris. He would allow no suitors to him on that day, for his readings were deep. He had found his old volume of John of Menz, and read much in him in those days. On one of these *decadis* (it happened to be a Sunday also, if such things had been taken account of), he was sitting thus occupied in his old room when a messenger did gain admittance, bringing a note. Raynaud gave a start of pleasure as he read it. It was signed “Sommarel,” and it asked him to go and see the writer, who, it seemed, was in the prison of La Force. A pleasant air of ancient days seemed to breathe round Raynaud as he read the old handwriting and saw the familiar name. He put down his book and followed the messenger at once.

Sommarel came to meet him, white and trembling, very dirty too, though his clothes were better than those which the citizens of Paris thought it wise to wear. He had an ugly cut upon his cheek, which showed purple against his dead white skin.

“I never knew anything about it when I bought the property,” he began at once, almost before Raynaud had had time to greet him, and his voice trembled miserably. “God is my witness, monsieur, that I never knew! I was preparing to write to monsieur, to the illustrious citizen, and tell him—Ah, *mon Dieu*, citizen, my old friend, save me, save me! I have a wife and——” and here his trembling voice broke into sobs.

“*Dieu de Dieu*, what does he mean?”

said Raynaud, in his gentle voice. "What is it, my old comrade? You are beside yourself."

"What? The money, the treasure that I found,—was I not arrested because of that?" Sommarel checked himself in his explanation. His voice trembled less.

"Money? Treasure? I know nothing of it," Raynaud said dreamily, passing his hand before his face. "Treasure? Ah, at Les Colombiers? I heard something of that,—long ago," he added, as if plunged in a deep reverie.

Sommarel stared. He had only completed the purchase of Les Colombiers two months previously, and it was only a week since he had discovered under an old apple-tree an iron box containing three thousand pieces of twenty livres,—sixty thousand livres in gold, besides jewels. He had thought of making some communication to Raynaud, who was too powerful a person to be left unpropitiated; but had taken no steps towards doing so till three days before he had been arrested and carried up to Paris. If he had only waited and not been so unnerved by fear! He tried now to put a good face upon it. "Ah, then my arrest had been no doubt a pure mistake. How fortunate that you, my old friend, should have the power of releasing me so easily! You will order me to be set at liberty at once, *n'est-ce pas?*"

Raynaud's face darkened. It was as if some subject totally foreign to his present thoughts had been forced upon him. "I have not the power," he said briefly; and while that dark look was on his face Sommarel dared not press the point.

Presently his face cleared, and he and his old comrade exchanged information about their lives since the day when they parted close upon six years ago.

Sommarel had prospered moderately (he was careful to say only moderately) as a lawyer in Tours, had taken to himself a wife, and had two children. He looked piteously up at Raynaud

as he told him these last details. But the other only went on to ask about Tourret and Gavaudun. Tourret, it seemed, had not gone to Switzerland. His father-in-law, the *ci-devant*, was dead. Tourret and his wife had still a moderate income, and lived quietly in Auvergne. During all the talk Sommarel watched (as a dog watches) the face of his friend. He had, Sommarel saw, the same mild dreamy eyes which the young student had in days of yore, the same gentle voice. At last Raynaud got up to go.

"Ah! *mon Dieu*, Geoffroi, thou wilt not leave me here. Consider the danger! Have pity, have pity; think of my wife, my children!" Again his voice was choked with fear and grief.

Once more the dark look came into Raynaud's face. "I have not the power," he said, and hurried out.

Sommarel was in one of the early batches that came up for trial. But as a matter of fact his arrest had been a mistake, and there really appeared to be nothing against him. The Tribunal however hesitated to acquit; acquitting was an act which seemed almost contrary to nature. Besides this lawyer of Tours wore a better coat and finer linen than seemed compatible with the best citizenship,—always excepting the case of Robespierre, who was allowed by public opinion to wear silk stockings and gilt buckles. Still you could not precisely condemn a man for wearing good clothes. "What do you think?" one member whispered to Raynaud. "Must one acquit?" Raynaud made no answer; he only stepped from his seat on the rostrum to the body of the hall.

"I denounce the citizen," he said. "I have known him long, and I know him a proper subject for the guillotine."

"Geoffroi, my friend, have pity on me!" was all that Sommarel could say.

"Ah," said the other members, "he acknowledges the old acquaintanceship. Citizen Raynaud has acted the part of a good patriot!" And Sommarel was removed.



## VII.

EVERYBODY spoke of this act of patriotism on the part of Raynaud. It had its imitators; and before long it came to be a distinguishing note of Roman virtue to denounce some relative or friend. In such a case denunciation meant death as a matter of course. It was argued that only under the pressure of the most ardent patriotism had private feelings been so far sacrificed. To question therefore the knowledge of one who had been wrought to such a step was clearly absurd.

To Raynaud it only meant that the batches grew larger day by day. There was a question of dividing the Revolutionary Tribunal that the work of trial might be more expeditious, and Raynaud warmly advocated the scheme. Robespierre advocated it too. There were found some who said the gentle-eyed author of the saying, *Il faut du sang, et encore du sang, et toujours du sang*, was a better patriot than Robespierre himself; so Robespierre coldly advocated the scheme for division of the Tribunals and it was carried.

On the other hand the friends of Robespierre remarked that though it was Raynaud who had set the fashion of "denouncings," and though it was he who had finally introduced the practice of accepting these denouncings in the place of evidence, no more of his own friends or relations ever appeared before the Tribunals. The discontent which these hints began to arouse went so far that at last one of the denounced ones was acquitted by Raynaud's own Tribunal against his earnest pleadings. Of late, moreover, Samson had once been hissed and not cheered when he mounted the guillotine in the Place de la Révolution, and the tumbrils were no longer cursed so loudly as they rolled through the streets. No crowds preceded them dancing the *carmagnole* and singing; on the contrary, the crowd sometimes stood silent, some women were even heard to use words of pity. Raynaud

himself witnessed this scene; he went home and took to his bed. Robespierre was said to have declared that he was going too far and demoralising the guillotine.

Should he denounce his brother Gilbert and so vindicate his position once more? There was Tourret too living in Auvergne. Yes, he decided on both these; anything must be done rather than that the daily sacrifice should grow less. Meantime a piece of good fortune happened. Gavaudun, teaching French literature and law in Prague, had heard that Raynaud had risen to a position of importance without hearing of the details. He wrote to his former comrade asking for some help in a matter of private interest. Raynaud replied and succeeded at length in enticing Gavaudun to an interview with a supposed notary and notary's clerk upon the Swiss frontier. Gavaudun was seized and carried to Paris, denounced and executed. Raynaud's influence rose again: the batch of *condamnés* next day increased from thirty-nine to sixty-three; and once more the blood seemed to course through his veins.

But alas! next day came the news that Gilbert Raynaud had escaped. Only his father-in-law, old Plaidoyer, was seized. And people began to murmur against Raynaud again. But then Tourret had been taken; so came the news the day following; and he in due course was brought up to Paris.

It was said that seldom had a prisoner pleaded more eloquently than Tourret did. His speech was delivered as though addressed personally to Raynaud and to him alone, though in fact the latter was not holding the position of a judge but of a witness. Tourret spoke of their old comradeship, of pleasures and hardships shared in common, of this act of kindness on the part of Raynaud, of that return by himself. Then he went on to plead the innocence of his life since, buried as he had been down in the country,—“simple-minded and avoiding State affairs,” as he said,

quoting in Greek ; for he and Raynaud had read Aristophanes together in the old days. A momentary smile flitted across Raynaud's unexpressive face as he heard these words ; for he knew that if there had been any disposition to acquit upon the part of the judges, this display of learning would probably just turn the scale. Tourret went on to speak of his father-in-law lately dead, of his wife and one child, and his voice faltered a little—not over much. He spoke like a born orator ; even the judges were moved ; and Citizen Fourmisson whispered, looking at Raynaud's impassive countenance, "That man has a heart of stone." But then Citizen Fourmisson had always been of the party secretly opposed to the Aristides of the Tribunal. Aristides himself was as one who only listened for form's sake. When the speech was over he raised his head with that peculiar light in his eyes which seemed almost to mesmerise his fellow-judges and to call forth the word he expected. *Condamné !* came from all mouths at once, and the prisoner was removed to make way for the next.

## VIII.

OF the next day's batch to the guillotine in the Faubourg St. Marcel Tourret was the first name on the list. Raynaud was, as usual, upon the platform. Robespierre too had come that day to assist at the executions, jealous of the other's growing reputation for patriotism of an exalted kind. There were one or two other citizens of some note there. But these two stood before the rest, the observed of all observers ; Robespierre at any rate was, for he was not often seen in that remote south-east region. He had on an elegant drab coat, black breeches, and white stockings. Raynaud was in his usual coarse black coat and breeches and red cap of liberty ; and out of these rough habiliments the singular delicacy of his fea-

tures, the singular long white hands, showed only the more conspicuous.

He watched the cart as it drew up to the scaffold, watched the victims while they answered to their names, watched the first of them, Tourret, as he was brought upon the platform bound,—yet not as if he had ever seen him before, though his comrade cast upon him a glance which might have awed a Judas,—watched him as he was led forward and placed with his head upon the block.

There was, it has been said, always a momentary pause and hush before the fall of the first head. The details of the performance this day were the same as on the previous one. The swift-checked hiss, a dull,—a very dull thud.

Then a woman screamed as never woman had screamed before. The sound sent a thrill of horror through even that crowd, used as it was to horrors of many kinds. Those who were a little way off set the woman down as the wife of the condemned. But those who were close to her saw that she had not even been looking at the victim, that her eyes had been fixed upon Robespierre and his com—

But there was nobody standing beside Robespierre !

The woman was foaming at the mouth. "*Mon Dieu, c'était le diable !*" she moaned. Samson had hold of the head ; he turned to display it first to the two great men. Robespierre on his part turned round to speak to his neighbour, and then his face grew white to the lips. There was no Raynaud beside him ! Others had seen the same sight that the woman had seen. "It was Robespierre's familiar spirit," they said ; and in the talk which grew out of what they had to tell lay the germ of Thermidor.

But one acute-faced man close to the scaffolding was heard to murmur, "The mystic chain is broken—*Catena mystica rupta est !*"

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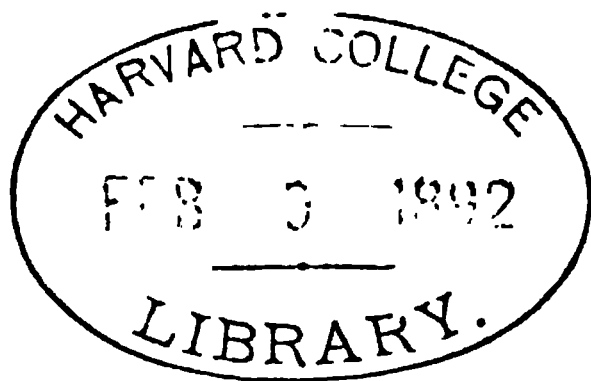
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# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

FEBRUARY, 1892.

DON ORSINO.<sup>1</sup>

BY F. MARION CRAWFORD.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE rage of speculation was at its height in Rome. Thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, of persons were embarked in enterprises which soon afterwards ended in total ruin to themselves and in very serious injury to many of the strongest financial bodies in the country. Yet it is a fact worth recording that the general principle upon which affairs were conducted was an honest one. The land was a fact, the buildings erected were facts, and there was actually a certain amount of capital, of genuine ready money, in use. The whole matter can be explained in a few words.

The population of Rome had increased considerably since the Italian occupation, and house-room was needed for the new comers. Secondly, the partial execution of the scheme for beautifying the city had destroyed great numbers of dwellings in the most thickly populated parts, and more house-room was needed to compensate the loss of habitations, while extensive lots of land were suddenly set free and offered for sale upon easy conditions in all parts of the town.

Those who availed themselves of these opportunities before the general rush began, realised immense profits, especially when they had some capital of their own to begin with. But capital was not indispensable. A man could buy his lot on credit; the banks

were ready to advance him money on notes of hand, in small amounts at high interest, wherewith to build his house or houses. When the building was finished the bank took a first mortgage upon the property, the owner let the house, paid the interest on the mortgage out of the rent, and pocketed the difference as clear gain. In the majority of cases it was the bank itself which sold the lot of land to the speculator. It is clear therefore that the only money which actually changed hands was that advanced in small sums by the bank itself.

As the speculation increased, the banks could not of course afford to lock up all the small notes of hand they received from various quarters. This paper became a circulating medium as far as Vienna, Paris, and even London. The crash came when Vienna, Paris and London lost faith in the paper, owing, in the first instance, to one or two small failures, and returned it upon Rome; the banks, unable to obtain cash for it at any price, and being short of ready money, could then no longer discount the speculator's further notes of hand; so that the speculator found himself with half-built houses upon his hands which he could neither let, nor finish, nor sell, and owing money upon bills which he had expected to meet by giving the bank a mortgage on the now valueless property.

That is what took place in the

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majority of cases, and it is not necessary to go into further details, though of course chance played all the usual variations upon the theme of ruin.

What distinguishes the period of speculation in Rome from most other manifestations of the kind in Europe is the prominent part played in it by the old land-holding families, a number of which were ruined in wild schemes which no sensible man of business would have touched. This was more or less the result of recent changes in the laws regulating the power of persons making a will.

Previous to 1870 the law of primogeniture was as much respected in Rome as in England, and was carried out with considerably greater strictness. The heir got everything, the other children got practically nothing but the smallest pittance. The palace, the gallery of pictures and statues, the lands, the villages, and the castles, descended in unbroken succession from eldest son to eldest son, indivisible in principle and undivided in fact.

The new law requires that one-half of the total property shall be equally distributed by the testator among all his children. He may leave the other half to any one he pleases, and as a matter of practice he of course leaves it to his eldest son.

Another law, however, forbids the alienation of all collections of works of art either wholly or in part, if they have existed as such for a certain length of time, and if the public has been admitted daily, or on any fixed days, to visit them. It is not in the power of the Borghese, or the Colonna, for instance, to sell a picture or a statue out of their galleries, nor to raise money upon such an object by mortgage or otherwise. Yet these works of art figure at a very high valuation in the total property of which the testator must divide one-half among his children, though in point of fact they yield no income whatever. But it is of no use to divide them, since none of the heirs could be at liberty to take them away

nor realise their value in any manner. The consequence is, that the principal heir, after the division has taken place, finds himself the nominal master of certain enormously valuable possessions, which in reality yield him nothing or next to nothing. He also foresees that in the next generation the same state of things will exist in a far higher degree, and that the position of the head of the family will go from bad to worse until a crisis of some kind takes place.

Such a case has recently occurred. A certain Roman prince is bankrupt. The sale of his gallery would certainly relieve the pressure, and would possibly free him from debt altogether. But neither he nor his creditors can lay a finger upon the pictures, nor raise a *centime* upon them. This man, therefore, is permanently reduced to penury, and his creditors are large losers, while he is still *de jure* and *de facto* the owner of property probably sufficient to cover all his obligations. Fortunately, he chances to be childless, a fact consoling, perhaps, to the philanthropist, but not especially so to the sufferer himself.

It is clear that the temptation to increase "distributable" property, if one may coin such an expression, is very great, and accounts for the way in which many Roman gentlemen have rushed headlong into speculation, though possessing none of the qualities necessary for success, and only one of the requisites, namely, a certain amount of ready money, or free and convertible property. A few have been fortunate, while the majority of those who have tried the experiment have been heavy losers. It cannot be said that any one of them all has shown natural talent for finance.

Let the reader forgive these dry explanations if he can. The facts explained have a direct bearing upon the story I am telling, but shall not, as mere facts, be referred to again.

I have already said that Ugo Del Ferice had returned to Rome soon after the change, had established him-

self with his wife, Donna Tullia, and was, at the time I am speaking about, deeply engaged in the speculations of the day. He had once been tolerably popular in society, having been looked upon as a harmless creature, useful in his way and very obliging. But the circumstances which had attended his flight some years earlier had become known, and most of his old acquaintances turned him the cold shoulder. He had expected this and was neither disappointed nor humiliated. He had made new friends and acquaintances during his exile, and it was to his interest to stand by them. Like many of those who have played petty and dishonourable parts in the revolutionary times, he had succeeded in building up a reputation for patriotism upon a very slight foundation, and had found persons willing to believe him a sufferer who had escaped martyrdom for the cause, and had deserved the crown of election to a constituency as a just reward of his devotion. The Romans cared very little what became of him. The old Blacks confounded Victor Emmanuel with Garibaldi, Cavour with Persiano, and Silvio Pellico with Del Ferice in one sweeping condemnation, desiring nothing so much as never to hear the hated names mentioned in their houses. The Grey party, being also Roman, disapproved of Ugo on general principles and particularly because he had been a spy; but the Whites, not being Romans at all, and entertaining an especial detestation for every distinctly Roman opinion, received him at his own estimation, as society receives most people who live in good houses, give good dinners, and observe the proprieties in the matter of visiting-cards. Those who knew anything definite of the man's antecedents were mostly persons who had little histories of their own, and they told no tales out of school. The great personages who had once employed him would have been magnanimous enough to acknowledge him in any case, but were agreeably disappointed when they discovered that he was not among

the common herd of pension-hunters, and claimed no substantial reward save their politeness and a line in the visiting-lists of their wives. And as he grew in wealth and importance they found that he could be useful still, as bank-directors and members of Parliament can be, in a thousand ways. So it came to pass that the Count and Countess Del Ferice became prominent persons in the Roman world.

Ugo was a man of undoubted talent. By his own individual efforts, though with small scruple as to the means he employed, he had raised himself from obscurity to a very enviable position. He had only once in his life been carried away by the weakness of a personal enmity, and he had been made to pay heavily for his caprice. If Donna Tullia had abandoned him when he was driven out of Rome by the influence of the Saracinesca, he might have disappeared altogether from the scene. But she was an odd compound of rashness and foresight, of belief and unbelief, and she had at that time felt herself bound by an oath she dared not break, besides being attached to him by a hatred of Giovanni Saracinesca almost as great as his own. She had followed him and had married him without hesitation; but she had kept the undivided possession of her fortune while allowing him a liberal use of her income. In return, she claimed a certain liberty of action when she chose to avail herself of it. She would not be bound in the choice of her acquaintances nor criticised in the measure of like or dislike she bestowed upon them. She was by no means wholly bad, and if she had a harmless fancy now and then, she required her husband to treat her as above suspicion. On the whole the arrangement worked very well. Del Ferice, on his part, was unswervingly faithful to her in word and deed, for he exhibited in a high degree that unfaltering constancy which is bred of a permanent, unalienable, financial interest. Bad men are often clever, but if their cleverness is of a superior order they rarely do

anything bad. It is true that when they yield to the pressure of necessity their wickedness surpasses that of other men in the same degree as their intelligence. Not only honesty, but all virtue collectively, is the best possible policy, provided that the politician can handle such a tremendous engine of evil as goodness is in the hands of a thoroughly bad man.

Those who desired pecuniary accommodation from the bank in which Del Ferice had an interest, had no better friend than he. His power with the directors seemed to be as boundless as his desire to assist the borrower. But he was helpless to prevent the foreclosure of a mortgage, and had been moved almost to tears in the expression of his sympathy with the debtor and of his horror at the hard-heartedness shown by his partners. To prove his disinterested spirit it only need be said that on many occasions he had actually come forward as a private individual and had taken over the mortgage himself, distinctly stating that he could not hold it for more than a year, but expressing a hope that the debtor might in that time retrieve himself. If this really happened, he earned the man's eternal gratitude; if not, he foreclosed indeed, but the loser never forgot that by Del Ferice's kindness he had been offered a last chance at a desperate moment. It could not be said to be Del Ferice's fault that the second case was the more frequent one, nor that the result to himself was profit in either event.

In his dealings with his constituency he showed a noble desire for the public welfare, for he was never known to refuse anything in reason to the electors who applied to him. It is true that in the case of certain applications, he consumed so much time in preliminary inquiries and subsequent formalities that the applicants sometimes died and sometimes emigrated to the Argentine Republic before the matter could be settled; but they bore with them to South America—or to the grave—the belief that the

Onorevole Del Ferice was on their side, and the instances of his prompt, decisive and successful action were many. He represented a small town in the Neapolitan Province, and the benefits and advantages he had obtained for it were numberless. The provincial high road had been made to pass through it; all express trains stopped at its station, though the passengers who made use of the inestimable privilege did not average twenty in the month; it possessed a Piazza Vittorio Emmanuela, a Corso Garibaldi, a Via Cavour, a public garden of at least a quarter of an acre, planted with no less than twenty-five acacias and adorned by a fountain representing a desperate-looking character in the act of firing a finely executed revolver at an imaginary oppressor. Pigs were not allowed within the limits of the town, and the uniforms of the municipal brass band were perfectly new. Could civilisation do more? The bank of which Del Ferice was a director bought the *octroi* duties of the town at the periodical auction, and farmed them skilfully, together with those of many other towns in the same province.

So Del Ferice was a very successful man, and it need scarcely be said that he was now not only independent of his wife's help but very much richer than she had ever been. They lived in a highly decorated, detached modern house in the new part of the city. The gilded gate before the little plot of garden bore their intertwined initials surmounted by a modest count's coronet. Donna Tullia would have preferred a coat-of-arms, or even a crest, but Ugo was sensitive to ridicule, and he was aware that a count's coronet in Rome means nothing at all, whereas a coat-of-arms means vastly more than in most cities.

Within, the dwelling was somewhat unpleasantly gorgeous. Donna Tullia had always loved red, both for itself and because it made her own complexion seem less florid by contrast, and accordingly red satin predominated in the drawing-rooms, red velvet in the



dining-room, red damask in the hall, and red carpets on the stairs. Some fine specimens of gilding were also to be seen, and Del Ferice had been one of the first to use electric light. Everything was new, expensive and polished to its extreme capacity for reflection. The servants wore vivid liveries, and on formal occasions the butler appeared in short-clothes and black silk stockings. Donna Tullia's equipage was visible at a great distance, but Del Ferice's own coachman and groom wore dark green with black epaulettes.

On the morning which Orsino and Madame d'Aragona had spent in Gouache's studio the Countess Del Ferice entered her husband's study in order to consult him upon a rather delicate matter. He was alone, but busy as usual. His attention was divided between an important bank operation and a petition for his help in obtaining a decoration for the mayor of the town he represented. The claim to this distinction seemed to rest chiefly on the petitioner's unasked evidence in regard to his own moral rectitude, yet Del Ferice was really exercising all his ingenuity to discover some suitable reason for asking the favour. He laid the papers down with a sigh as Donna Tullia came in.

"Good morning, my angel," he said suavely, as he pointed to a chair at his side—the one usually occupied at this hour by seekers for financial support. "Have you rested well?"

He never failed to ask the question.

"Not badly, not badly, thank Heaven!" answered Donna Tullia. "I have a dreadful cold, of course, and a headache—my head is really splitting."

"Rest—rest is what you need, my dear——"

"Oh, it is nothing. This Durakoff is a great man. If he had not made me go to Carlsbad—I really do not know. But I have something to say to you. I want your help, Ugo. Please listen to me."

Ugo's fat white face already expressed anxious attention. To accentuate the expression of his readiness to listen, he now put all his papers into a drawer and turned towards his wife.

"I must go to the Jubilee," said Donna Tullia, coming to the point.

"Of course you must go——"

"And I must have my seat among the Roman ladies."

"Of course you must," repeated Del Ferice with a little less alacrity.

"Ah! You see,—it is not so easy. You know it is not. Yet I have as good a right to my seat as any one—better perhaps."

"Hardly that," observed Ugo with a smile. "When you married me, my angel, you relinquished your claims to a seat at the Vatican functions."

"I did nothing of the kind. I never said so, I am sure."

"Perhaps if you could make that clear to the major-duomo——"

"Absurd, Ugo; you know it is. Besides, I will not beg. You must get me the seat. You can do anything with your influence."

"You could easily get into one of the diplomatic tribunes," observed Ugo.

"I will not go there. I mean to assert myself. I am a Roman lady, and I will have my seat; and you must get it for me."

"I will do my best. But I do not quite see where I am to begin. It will need time and consideration and much tact."

"It seems to me very simple. Go to one of the clerical deputies and say that you want the ticket for your wife——"

"And then?"

"Give him to understand that you will vote for his next measure. Nothing could be simpler, I am sure."

Del Ferice smiled blandly at his wife's ideas of parliamentary diplomacy.

"There are no clerical deputies in the parliament of the nation. If there were the thing might be possible, and

it would be very interesting to all the clericals to read an account of the transaction in the *Osservatore Romano*. In any case, I am not sure that it will be much to our advantage that the wife of the Onorevole Del Ferice should be seen seated in the midst of the Black ladies. It will produce an unfavourable impression."

"If you are going to talk of impressions——" Donna Tullia shrugged her massive shoulders.

"No, my dear. You mistake me. I am not going to talk of them, because, as I at once told you, it is quite right that you should go to this affair. If you go, you must go in the proper way. No doubt there will be people who will have invitations but will not use them. We can perhaps procure you the use of such a ticket."

"I do not care what name is on the paper, provided I can sit in the right place."

"Very well," answered Del Ferice. "I will do my best."

"I expect it of you, Ugo. It is not often that I ask anything of you, is it? It is the least you can do. The idea of getting a card that is not to be used is good; of course they will all get them, and some of them are sure to be ill."

Donna Tullia went away satisfied that what she wanted would be forthcoming at the right moment. What she had said was true. She rarely asked anything of her husband. But when she did, she gave him to understand that she would have it at any price. It was her way of asserting herself from time to time. On the present occasion she had no especial interest at stake and any other woman might have been satisfied with a seat in the diplomatic tribune, which could probably have been obtained without great difficulty. But she had heard that the seats there were to be very high and she did not really wish to be placed in too prominent a position. The light might be unfavourable, and she knew that she was subject to growing very red in places where it was hot.

She had once been a handsome woman and a very vain one, but even her vanity could not survive the daily torture of the looking-glass. To sit for four or five hours in a high light, facing fifty thousand people, was more than she could bear with equanimity.

Del Ferice, being left to himself, returned to the question of the mayor's decoration, which was of vastly greater importance to him than his wife's position at the approaching function. If he failed to get the man what he wanted, the fellow would doubtless apply to some one of the opposite party, would receive the coveted honour, and would take the whole voting population of the town with him at the next general election, to the total discomfiture of Del Ferice. It was necessary to find some valid reason for proposing him for the distinction. Ugo could not decide what to do just then, but he ultimately hit upon a successful plan. He advised his correspondent to write a pamphlet upon the rapid improvement of agricultural interests in his district under the existing Ministry, and he even went so far as to enclose with his letter some notes on the subject. These notes proved to be so voluminous and complete that when the mayor had copied them he could not find a pretext for adding a single word or correction. They were printed upon excellent paper, with ornamental margins, under the title of *Onward, Parthenope!* Of course every one knows that Parthenope means Naples, the Neapolitans and the Neapolitan province, a siren of that name having come to final grief somewhere between the Chiatamone and Posilippo. The mayor got his decoration, and Del Ferice was re-elected; but no one has inquired into the truth of the statements made in the pamphlet upon agriculture.

It is clear that a man who was capable of taking so much trouble for so small a matter would not disappoint his wife when she had set her heart upon such a trifle as a ticket for the Jubilee. Within three days he had

the promise of what he wanted. A certain lonely lady of high position lay very ill just then, and it need scarcely be explained that her confidential servant fell upon the invitation as soon as it arrived and sold it for a round sum to the first applicant, who happened to be Count Del Fèrice's valet. So the matter was arranged, privately and without scandal.

All Rome was alive with expectation. The date fixed was the first of January, and as the day approached the curious foreigner mustered in his thousands and tens of thousands and took the city by storm. The hotels were thronged. The billiard tables were let as furnished rooms, people slept in the lifts, on the landings, in the porters' lodges. The thrifty Romans retreated to roofs and cellars and let their small dwellings. People reaching the city on the last night slept in the cabs they had hired to take them to Saint Peter's before dawn. Even the supplies of food ran low and the hungry fed on what they could get, while the delicate of taste very often did not feed at all. There was of course the usual scare about a revolutionary demonstration, to which the natives paid very little attention, but which delighted the foreigners.

Not more than half of those who hoped to witness the ceremony saw anything of it, though the basilica will hold some eighty thousand people at a pinch, and the crowd on that occasion was far greater than at the opening of the Œcumenical Council in 1869.

Madame d'Aragona had also determined to be present, and she expressed her desire to Gouache. She had spoken the strict truth when she had said that she knew no one in Rome, and so far as general accuracy is concerned it was equally true that she had not fixed the length of her stay. She had not come with any settled purpose beyond a vague idea of having her portrait painted by the French artist, and unless she took the trouble to make acquaintances, there was nothing attractive enough about the capital to keep her. She allowed herself to be driven about

the town, on pretence of seeing churches and galleries, but in reality she saw very little of either. She was pre-occupied with her own thoughts and subject to fits of abstraction. Most things seemed to her intensely dull, and the unhappy guide who had been selected to accompany her on her excursions wasted his learning upon her on the first morning, and subsequently exhausted the magnificent catalogue of impossibilities which he had concocted for the especial benefit of the uncultivated foreigner, without eliciting so much as a look of interest or an expression of surprise. He was a young and fascinating guide, wearing a white satin tie, and on the third day he recited some verses of Stecchetti and was about to risk a declaration of worship in ornate prose, when he was suddenly rather badly scared by the lady's yellow eyes, and ran on nervously with a string of deceased popes and their dates.

"Get me a card for the Jubilee," she said abruptly.

"An entrance is very easily procured," answered the guide. "In fact I have one in my pocket, as it happens. I bought it for twenty francs this morning, thinking that one of my foreigners would perhaps take it of me. I do not even gain a franc—my word of honour."

Madame d'Aragona glanced at the slip of paper.

"Not that," she answered. "Do you imagine that I will stand? I want a seat in one of the tribunes."

The guide lost himself in apologies, but explained that he could not get what she desired.

"What are you for?" she inquired.

She was an indolent woman, but when by any chance she wanted anything, Donna Tullia herself was not more restless. She drove at once to Gouache's studio. He was alone and she told him what she needed.

"The Jubilee, madame? Is it possible that you have been forgotten?"

"Since they have never heard of me! I have not the slightest claim to a place."

"It is you who say that. But your place is already secured. Fear nothing. You will be with the Roman ladies."

"I do not understand——"

"It is simple. I was thinking of it yesterday. Young Saracinesca comes in and begins to talk about you. 'There is Madame d'Aragona who has no seat,' he says. 'One must arrange that.' So it is arranged."

"By Don Orsino?"

"You would not accept? No! A young man, and you have only met once. But tell me what you think of him. Do you like him?"

"One does not like people so easily as that," said Madame d'Aragona. "How have you arranged about the seat?"

"It is very simple. There are to be two days, you know. My wife has her cards for both, of course. She will only go once. If you will accept the one for the first day she will be very happy."

"You are angelic, my dear friend! Then I go as your wife?" She laughed.

"Precisely. You will be Faustina Gouache instead of Madame d'Aragona."

"How delightful! By the by, do not call me Madame d'Aragona. It is not my name. I might as well call you Monsieur de Paris, because you are a Parisian."

"I do not put Anastase Gouache de Paris on my cards," answered Gouache with a laugh. "What may I call you? Donna Maria?"

"My name is Maria Consuelo d'Aranjuez."

"An ancient Spanish name," said Gouache.

"My husband was an Italian."

"Ah! Of Spanish descent, originally of Aragona. Of course."

"Exactly. Since I am here, shall I sit for you? You might almost finish to-day."

"Not so soon as that. It is Don Orsino's hour, but as he has not come, and since you are so kind—by all means."

"Ah, is he unpunctual?"

"He is probably running after those abominable dogs in pursuit of the feeble fox—what they call the noble sport."

Gouache's face expressed considerable disgust.

"Poor fellow!" said Maria Consuelo. "He has nothing else to do."

"He will get used to it. They all do. Besides, it is really the natural condition of man. Total idleness is his element. If Providence meant man to work, it should have given him two heads, one for his profession and one for himself. A man needs one entire and undivided intelligence for the study of his own individuality."

"What an idea!"

"Do not men of great genius notoriously forget themselves, forget to eat and drink and dress themselves like Christians? That is because they have not two heads. Providence expects a man to do two things at once—sing an air from an opera and invent the steam-engine at the same moment. Nature rebels. Then Providence and nature do not agree. What becomes of religion? It is all a mystery. Believe me, madame, art is easier than nature, and painting is simpler than theology."

Maria Consuelo listened to Gouache's extraordinary remarks with a smile.

"You are either paradoxical, or irreligious, or both," she said.

"Irreligious? I, who carried a rifle at Mentana? No, madame, I am a good Catholic."

"What does that mean?"

"I believe in God, and I love my wife. I leave it to the Church to define my other articles of belief. I have only one head, as you see."

Gouache smiled, but there was a note of sincerity in the odd statement which did not escape his hearer.

"You are not of the type which belongs to the end of the century," she said.

"That type was not invented when I was forming myself."

"Perhaps you belong rather to

the coming age—the age of simplification.”

“As distinguished from the age of mystification—religious, political, scientific and artistic,” suggested Gouache. “The people of that day will guess the Sphinx’s riddle.”

“Mine? You were comparing me to a sphinx the other day.”

“Yours, perhaps, madame. Who knows? Are you the typical woman of the ending century?”

“Why not?” asked Maria Consuelo with a sleepy look.

#### CHAPTER V.

THERE is something grand in any great assembly of animals belonging to the same race. The very idea of an immense number of living creatures conveys an impression not suggested by anything else. A compact herd of fifty or sixty thousand lions would be an appalling vision, beside which a like multitude of human beings would sink into insignificance. A drove of wild cattle is, I think, a finer sight than a regiment of cavalry in motion, for the cavalry is composite, half man and half horse, whereas the cattle have the advantage of unity. But we can never see so many animals of any species driven together into one limited space as to be equal to a vast throng of men and women, and we conclude naturally enough that a crowd consisting solely of our own kind is the most imposing one conceivable.

It was scarcely light on the morning of New Year’s Day when the Princess Sant’ Ilario found herself seated in one of the low tribunes on the north side of the high altar in Saint Peter’s. Her husband and her eldest son had accompanied her, and having placed her in a position from which they judged she could easily escape at the end of the ceremony, they remained standing in the narrow winding passage between improvised barriers which led from the tribune to the door of the sacristy, and which had been so arranged as to prevent

confusion. Here they waited, greeting their acquaintances when they could recognise them in the dim twilight of the church, and watching the ever-increasing crowd that surged slowly backward and forward outside the barrier. The old prince was entitled by an hereditary office to a place in the great procession of the day, and was not now with them.

Orsino felt as though the whole world were assembled about him within the huge cathedral, as though its heart were beating audibly and its muffled breathing rising and falling in his hearing. The unceasing sound that went up from the compact mass of living beings was soft in quality, but enormous in volume and sustained in tone, a great whispering which might have been heard a mile away. One hears in mammoth musical festivals the extraordinary effect of four or five thousand voices singing very softly; it is not to be compared to the unceasing whisper of fifty thousand men.

The young fellow was conscious of a strange, irregular thrill of enthusiasm which ran through him from time to time and startled his imagination into life. It was only the instinct of a strong vitality unconsciously longing to be the central point of the vitalities around it. But he could not understand that. It seemed to him like a great opportunity brought within reach but slipping by untaken, not to return again. He felt a strange, almost uncontrollable longing to spring upon one of the tribunes, to raise his voice, to speak to the great multitude, to fire all those men to break out and carry everything before them. He laughed audibly at himself. Sant’ Ilario looked at his son with some curiosity.

“What amuses you?” he asked.

“A dream,” answered Orsino, still smiling. “Who knows,” he exclaimed after a pause, “what would happen, if at the right moment the right man could stir such a crowd as this?”

“Strange things,” replied Sant’



Ilario gravely. "A crowd is a terrible weapon."

"Then my dream was not so foolish after all. One might make history to-day."

Sant' Ilario made a gesture expressive of indifference.

"What is history?" he asked. "A comedy in which the actors have no written parts, but improvise their speeches and actions as best they can. That is the reason why history is so dull and so full of mistakes."

"And of surprises," suggested Orsino.

"The surprises in history are always disagreeable, my boy," answered Sant' Ilario.

Orsino felt the coldness in the answer, and felt even more his father's readiness to damp any expression of enthusiasm. Of late he had encountered this chilling indifference at almost every turn, whenever he gave vent to his admiration for any sort of activity.

It was not that Giovanni Saracinesca had any intention of repressing his son's energetic instincts, and he assuredly had no idea of the effect his words often produced. He sometimes wondered at the sudden silence which came over the young man after such conversations, but he did not understand it and on the whole paid little attention to it. He remembered that he himself had been different, and had been wont to argue hotly and not unfrequently to quarrel with his father about trifles. He himself had been headstrong, passionate, often intractable in his early youth, and his father had been no better at sixty and was little improved in that respect even at his present great age. But Orsino did not argue. He suggested, and if any one disagreed with him he became silent. He seemed to possess energy in action, and a number of rather fantastic aspirations; but in conversation he was easily silenced and in outward manner he would have seemed too yielding if he had not often seemed too cold.

Giovanni did not see that Orsino was most like his mother in character, while the contact with a new generation had given him something unfamiliar to the old, an affectation at first, but one which habit was amalgamating with the real nature beneath.

No doubt it was wise and right to discourage ideas which would tend in any way to revolution. Giovanni had seen revolutions and had been the loser by them. It was not wise, and was certainly not necessary to throw cold water on the young fellow's harmless aspirations. But Giovanni had lived for many years in his own way, rich, respected, and supremely happy, and he believed that his way was good enough for Orsino. He had, in his youth, tried most things for himself, and had found them failures so far as happiness was concerned. Orsino might make the series of experiments in his turn if he pleased, but there was no adequate reason for such an expenditure of energy. The sooner the boy loved some girl who would make him a good wife, and the sooner he married her, the sooner he would find that calm, satisfactory existence which had not finally come to Giovanni until after thirty years of age.

As for the question of fortune, it was true that there were four sons, but there was Giovanni's mother's fortune, there was Corona's fortune, and there was the great Saracinesca estate behind both. They were all so extremely rich that the deluge must be very distant.

Orsino understood none of these things. He only realised that his father had the faculty, and apparently the intention, of freezing any originality he chanced to show, and he inwardly resented the coldness, quietly, if foolishly, resolving to astonish those who misunderstood him by seizing the first opportunity of doing something out of the common way. For some time he stood in silence watching the people who came by and glancing from time to time at the dense crowd outside the barrier. He was suddenly

aware that his father was observing intently a lady who advanced along the open way.

"There is Tullia Del Ferice!" exclaimed Sant' Ilario in surprise.

"I do not know her, except by sight," observed Orsino indifferently.

The countess was very imposing in her black veil and draperies. Her red face seemed to lose its colour in the dim church, and she affected a slow and stately manner more becoming to her weight than was her natural restless vivacity. She had got what she desired and she swept proudly along to take her old place among the ladies of Rome. No one knew whose card she had delivered up at the entrance to the sacristy, and she enjoyed the triumph of showing that the wife of the revolutionary, the banker, the member of parliament, had not lost caste after all.

She looked Giovanni full in the face with her disagreeable blue eyes as she came up, apparently not meaning to recognise him. Then, just as she passed him, she deigned to make a very slight inclination of the head, just enough to compel Sant' Ilario to return the salutation. It was very well done. Orsino did not know all the details of the past events, but he knew that his father had once wounded Del Ferice in a duel and he looked at Del Ferice's wife with some curiosity. He had seldom had an opportunity of being so near to her.

"It was certainly not about her that they fought," he reflected. "It must have been about some other woman, if there was a woman in the question at all."

A moment later he was aware that a pair of tawny eyes were fixed on him. Maria Consuelo was following Donna Tullia at a distance of a dozen yards. Orsino came forward and his new acquaintance held out her hand. They had not met since they had first seen each other.

"It was so kind of you," she said.

"What, madame?"

"To suggest this to Gouache. I

should have had no ticket—where shall I sit?"

Orsino did not understand, for though he had mentioned the subject, Gouache had not told him what he meant to do. But there was no time to be lost in conversation. Orsino led her to the nearest opening in the tribune and pointed to a seat.

"I called," he said quickly. "You did not receive——"

"Come again; I will be at home," she answered in a low voice, as she passed him.

She sat down in a vacant place beside Donna Tullia, and Orsino noticed that his mother was just behind them both. Corona had been watching him unconsciously, as she often did, and was somewhat surprised to see him conducting a lady whom she did not know. A glance told her that the lady was a foreigner; as such, if she were present at all, she should have been in the diplomatic tribune. There was nothing to think of, and Corona tried to solve the small social problem that presented itself. Orsino strolled back to his father's side.

"Who is she?" inquired Sant' Ilario with some curiosity.

"The lady who wanted the tiger's skin — Aranjuez — I told you of her."

"The portrait you gave me was not flattering. She is handsome, if not beautiful."

"Did I say she was not?" asked Orsino with a visible irritation most unlike him.

"I thought so. You said she had yellow eyes, red hair, and a squint." Sant' Ilario laughed.

"Perhaps I did. But the effect seems to be harmonious."

"Decidedly so. You might have introduced me."

To this Orsino said nothing, but relapsed into a moody silence. He would have liked nothing better than to bring about the acquaintance, but he had only met Maria Consuelo once, though that interview had been a long one, and he remembered her rather

short answer to his offer of service in the way of making acquaintances.

Maria Consuelo on her part was quite unconscious that she was sitting in front of the Princess Sant' Ilario, but she had seen the lady by her side bow to Orsino's companion in passing, and she guessed from a certain resemblance that the dark, middle-aged man might be young Saracinesca's father. Donna Tullia had seen Corona well enough, but as they had not spoken for nearly twenty years she decided not to risk a nod where she could not command an acknowledgment of it. So she pretended to be quite unconscious of her old enemy's presence.

Donna Tullia, however, had noticed as she turned her head in sitting down that Orsino was piloting a strange lady to the tribune, and when the latter sat down beside her, she determined to make her acquaintance, no matter upon what pretext. The time was approaching at which the procession was to make its appearance, and Donna Tullia looked about for something upon which to open the conversation, glancing from time to time at her neighbour. It was easy to see that the place and the surroundings were equally unfamiliar to the newcomer, who looked with evident interest at the twisted columns of the high altar, at the vast mosaics in the dome, at the red damask hangings of the nave, at the Swiss guards, the chamberlains in court dress, and at all the mediæval-looking, motley figures that moved about within the space kept open for the coming function.

"It is a wonderful sight," said Donna Tullia in French, very softly, and almost as though speaking to herself.

"Wonderful indeed," answered Maria Consuelo, "especially to a stranger."

"Madame is a stranger, then," observed Donna Tullia with an agreeable smile.

She looked into her neighbour's face and for the first time realised that she was a striking person.

"Quite," replied the latter, briefly, and as though not wishing to press the conversation.

"I fancied so," said Donna Tullia, "though on seeing you in these seats, among us Romans——"

"I received a card through the kindness of a friend."

There was a short pause, during which Donna Tullia concluded that the friend must have been Orsino. But the next remark threw her off the scent.

"It was his wife's ticket, I believe," said Maria Consuelo. "She could not come. I am here on false pretences." She smiled carelessly.

Donna Tullia lost herself in speculation, but failed to solve the problem.

"You have chosen a most favourable moment for your first visit to Rome," she remarked at last.

"Yes. I am always fortunate. I believe I have seen everything worth seeing ever since I was a little girl."

"She is somebody," thought Donna Tullia. "Probably the wife of a diplomatist, though. Those people see everything, and talk of nothing but what they have seen."

"This is historic," she said aloud. "You will have a chance of contemplating the Romans in their glory. Colonna and Orsino marching side by side, and old Saracinesca in all his magnificence. He is eighty-two years old."

"Saracinesca!" repeated Maria Consuelo, turning her tawny eyes upon her neighbour.

"Yes. The father of Sant' Ilario—grandfather of that young fellow who showed you to your seat."

"Don Orsino? Yes, I know him slightly."

Corona sitting immediately behind them heard her son's name. As the two ladies turned towards each other in conversation she heard distinctly what they said. Donna Tullia was of course aware of this.

"Do you?" she asked. "His father is a most estimable man—just

a little too estimable, if you understand! As for the boy——”

Donna Tullia moved her broad shoulders expressively. It was a habit of which even the irreproachable Del Ferice could not cure her. Corona's face darkened.

“You can hardly call him a boy,” observed Maria Consuelo with a smile.

“Ah, well—I might have been his mother,” Donna Tullia answered with a contempt for the affectation of youth which she rarely showed. But Corona began to understand that the conversation was meant for her ears, and grew angry by degrees. Donna Tullia had indeed been near to marrying Giovanni, and in that sense, too, she might have been Orsino's mother.

“I fancied you spoke rather disparagingly,” said Maria Consuelo, with a certain degree of interest.

“I? No, indeed. On the contrary, Don Orsino is a very fine fellow—but thrown away, positively thrown away in his present surroundings. Of what use is all this English education—but you are a stranger, madame, you cannot understand our Roman point of view.”

“If you could explain it to me, I might, perhaps,” suggested the other.

“Ah, yes—if I could explain it! But I am far too ignorant myself—no, ignorant is not the word—too prejudiced, perhaps, to make you see it quite as it is. Perhaps I am a little too liberal, and the Saracinesca are certainly far too conservative. They mistake education for progress. Poor Don Orsino, I am sorry for him.”

Donna Tullia found no other escape from the difficulty into which she had thrown herself.

“I did not know that he was to be pitied,” said Maria Consuelo.

“Oh, not he in particular, perhaps,” answered the stout countess, growing more and more vague. “They are all to be pitied, you know. What is to become of young men brought up in that way? The club, the turf, the card-table—to drink, to gamble, to bet, it is not an existence!”

“Do you mean that Don Orsino leads that sort of life?” inquired Maria Consuelo indifferently.

Again Donna Tullia's heavy shoulders moved contemptuously.

“What else is there for him to do?”

“And his father? Did he not do likewise in his youth?”

“His father? Ah, he was different—before he married—full of life, activity, originality!”

“And since his marriage?”

“He has become estimable, most estimable.” The smile with which Donna Tullia accompanied the statement was intended to be fine, but was only spiteful. Maria Consuelo, who saw everything with her sleepy glance, noticed the fact.

Corona was disgusted, and leaned back in her seat, as far as possible, in order not to hear more. She could not help wondering who the strange lady might be to whom Donna Tullia was so freely expressing her opinions concerning the Saracinesca, and she determined to ask Orsino after the ceremony. But she wished to hear as little more as she could.

“When a married man becomes what you call estimable,” said Donna Tullia's companion, “he either adores his wife or hates her.”

“What a charming idea!” laughed the countess. It was tolerably evident that the remark was beyond her.

“She is stupid,” thought Maria Consuelo. “I fancied so from the first. I will ask Don Orsino about her. He will say something amusing. It will be a subject of conversation at all events, in place of that endless tiger I invented the other day. I wonder whether this woman expects me to tell her who I am? That will amount to an acquaintance. She is certainly somebody, or she would not be here. On the other hand, she seems to dislike the only man I know besides Gouache. That may lead to complications. Let us talk of Gouache first, and be guided by circumstances.”

"Do you know Monsieur Gouache?" she inquired abruptly.

"The painter? Yes—I have known him a long time. Is he perhaps painting your portrait?"

"Exactly. It is really for that purpose that I am in Rome. What a charming man!"

"Do you think so? Perhaps he is. He painted me some time ago. I was not very well satisfied. But he has talent."

Donna Tullia had never forgiven the artist for not putting enough soul into the picture he had painted of her when she was a very young widow.

"He has a great reputation," said Maria Consuelo, "and I think he will succeed very well with me. Besides, I am grateful to him. He and his painting have been a pleasant episode in my short stay here."

"Really? I should hardly have thought you could find it worth your while to come all the way to Rome to be painted by Gouache," observed Donna Tullia. "But of course, as I say, he has talent."

"This woman is rich," she said to herself. "The wives of diplomatists do not allow themselves such caprices, as a rule. I wonder who she is?"

"Great talent," assented Maria Consuelo. "And great charm, I think."

"Ah, well—of course—I dare say. We Romans cannot help thinking that for an artist he is a little too much occupied in being a gentleman—and for a gentleman he is quite too much an artist."

The remark was not original with Donna Tullia, but had been reported to her as Spicca's, and Spicca had really said something similar about somebody else.

"I had not got that impression," said Maria Consuelo, quietly.

"She hates him too," she thought. "She seems to hate everybody. That either means that she knows everybody, or is not received in society. But of course you know him better

than I do," she added aloud, after a little pause.

At that moment a strain of music broke out above the great, soft, muffled whispering that filled the basilica. Some thirty chosen voices of the choir of St. Peter's had begun the hymn *Tu es Petrus*, as the procession began to defile from the south aisle into the nave, close by the great door, to traverse the whole distance thence to the high altar. The Pope's own choir, consisting solely of the singers of the Sistine Chapel, waited silently behind the lattice under the statue of Saint Veronica.

The song rang out louder and louder, simple and grand. Those who have heard Italian singers at their best know that thirty young Roman throats can emit a volume of sound equal to that which a hundred men of any other nation could produce. The stillness around them increased, too, as the procession lengthened. The great, dark crowd stood shoulder to shoulder, breathless with expectation, each man and woman feeling for a few short moments that thrill of mysterious anxiety and impatience which Orsino had felt. No one who was there can ever forget what followed. More than forty cardinals filed out in front from the Chapel of the Pietà. Then the hereditary assistants of the Holy See, the heads of the Colonna and the Orsini houses, entered the nave, side by side for the first time, I believe, in history. Immediately after them, high above all the procession and the crowd, appeared the great chair of state, the huge white feathered fans moving slowly on each side, and upon the throne, the central figure of that vast display, sat the Pope, Leo the Thirteenth.

Then, without warning and without hesitation, a shout went up such as had never been heard before in that dim cathedral, nor will, perhaps, be heard again. "*Viva il Papa-Re!* Long life to the Pope-King!" At the same instant, as though at a preconcerted signal—utterly impossible



in such a throng—in the twinkling of an eye, the dark crowd was as white as snow. In every hand a white handkerchief was raised, fluttering and waving above every head. And the shout once taken up, drowned the strong voices of the singers as long-drawn thunder drowns the pattering of the raindrops and the sighing of the wind. The wonderful face, that seemed to be carved out of transparent alabaster, smiled and slowly turned from side to side as it passed by. The thin, fragile hand moved unceasingly, blessing the people.

Orsino Saracinesca saw and heard, and his young face turned pale while his lips set themselves. By his side, a head shorter than he, stood his father, lost in thought as he gazed at the mighty spectacle of what had been, and of what might still have been, but for one day of history's surprises.

Orsino said nothing, but he glanced at Sant' Ilario's face as though to remind his father of what he had said half an hour earlier; and the elder man knew that there had been truth in the boy's words. There were soldiers in the church, and they were not Italian soldiers—some thousands of them in all, perhaps. They were armed, and there were at the very least computation thirty thousand strong, grown men in the crowd. And the crowd was on fire. Had there been a hundred, nay a score, of desperate, devoted leaders there, who knows what bloody work might not have been done in the city before the sun went down? Who knows what new surprises history might have found for her play? The thought must have crossed many minds at that moment. But no one stirred; the religious ceremony remained a religious ceremony and nothing more; holy peace reigned within the walls, and the hour of peril glided away undisturbed to take its place among memories of good.

"The world is worn out!" thought Orsino. "The days of great deeds are over. Let us eat and drink, for to-

morrow we die—they are right in teaching me their philosophy."

A gloomy, sullen melancholy took hold of the boy's young nature, a passing mood, perhaps, but one which left its mark upon him. For he was at that age when a very little thing will turn the balance of a character, when an older man's thoughtless words may direct half a lifetime in a good or evil channel, being recalled and repeated for a score of years. Who is it that does not remember that day when an impatient "I will," or a defiant "I will not," turned the whole current of his existence in the one direction or the other, towards good or evil, towards success or failure? Who, that has fought his way against odds into the front rank, has forgotten the woman's look that gave him courage, or the man's sneer that braced nerve and muscle to strike the first of many hard blows?

The depression which fell upon Orsino was lasting, for that morning at least. The stupendous pageant went on before him, the choirs sang, the sweet boys' voices answered back, like an angel's song, out of the lofty dome, the incense rose in columns through the streaming sunlight as the high mass proceeded. Again the Pope was raised upon the chair and borne out into the nave, whence in the solemn silence the thin, clear, aged voice intoned the benediction three times, slowly rising and falling, pausing and beginning again. Once more the enormous shout broke out, louder and deeper than ever, as the procession moved away. Then all was over.

Orsino saw and heard, but the first impression was gone, and the thrill did not come back.

"It was a fine sight," he said to his father, as the shout died away.

"A fine sight! Have you no stronger expression than that?"

"No," answered Orsino, "I have not."

The ladies were already coming out of the tribunes, and Orsino saw his father give his arm to Corona to lead

her through the crowd. Naturally enough, Maria Consuelo and Donna Tullia came out together very soon after her. Orsino offered to pilot the former through the confusion, and she accepted gratefully. Donna Tullia walked beside them.

"You do not know me, Don Orsino," said she, with a gracious smile.

"I beg your pardon—you are the Countess del Ferice—I have not been back from England long, and have not had an opportunity of being presented."

Whatever might be Orsino's weaknesses, shyness was certainly not one of them, and as he made the civil answer he calmly looked at Donna Tullia as though to inquire what in the world she wished to accomplish in making his acquaintance. He had been so situated during the ceremony as not to see that the two ladies had fallen into conversation.

"Will you introduce me?" said Maria Consuelo. "We have been talking together."

She spoke in a low voice, but the words could hardly have escaped Donna Tullia. Orsino was very much surprised and not by any means pleased, for he saw that the elder woman had forced the introduction by a rather vulgar trick. Nevertheless, he could not escape.

"Since you have been good enough to recognise me," he said rather stiffly to Donna Tullia, "permit me to make you acquainted with Madame d'Aranjuez d'Aragona."

Both ladies nodded and smiled the smile of the newly introduced. Donna Tullia at once began to wonder how it was that a person with such a name should have but a plain "madame" to put before it. But her curiosity was not satisfied on this occasion.

"How absurd society is!" she exclaimed. "Madame d'Aranjuez and I have been talking all the morning, quite like old friends—and now we need an introduction!"

Maria Consuelo glanced at Orsino as

though expecting him to make some remark. But he said nothing.

"What should we do without conventions!" she said, for the sake of saying something.

By this time they were threading the endless passages of the sacristy building, on their way to the Piazza Santa Marta. Sant' Ilario and Corona were not far in front of them. At a turn in the corridor Corona looked back.

"There is Orsino talking to Tullia Del Ferice!" she exclaimed in great surprise. "And he has given his arm to that other lady who was next to her in the tribune."

"What does it matter?" asked Sant' Ilario indifferently. "By the by, the other lady is that Madame d'Aranjuez he talks about."

"Is she any relation of your mother's family, Giovanni?"

"Not that I am aware of. She may have married some younger son of whom I never heard."

"You do not seem to care whom Orsino knows," said Corona rather reproachfully.

"Orsino is grown up, dear. You must not forget that."

"Yes—I suppose he is," Corona answered with a little sigh. "But surely you will not encourage him to cultivate the Del Ferice!"

"I fancy it would take a deal of encouragement to drive him to that," said Sant' Ilario with a laugh. "He has better taste."

There was some confusion outside. People were waiting for their carriages, and as most of them knew each other intimately every one was talking at once. Donna Tullia nodded here and there, but Maria Consuelo noticed that her salutations were coldly returned. Orsino and his two companions stood a little aloof from the crowd. Just then the Saracinesca carriage drove up.

"Who is that magnificent woman?" asked Maria Consuelo, as Corona got in.

"My mother," said Orsino. "My father is getting in now."

"There comes my carriage! Please help me."

A modest hired brougham made its appearance. Orsino hoped that Madame d'Aranjuez would offer him a seat. But he was mistaken.

"I am afraid mine is miles away," said Donna Tullia. "Good-bye, I shall be so glad if you will come and see me." She held out her hand.

"May I not take you home?" asked Maria Consuelo. "There is just room—it will be better than waiting here."

Donna Tullia hesitated a moment, and then accepted, to Orsino's great annoyance. He helped the two ladies to get in, and shut the door.

"Come soon," said Maria Consuelo, giving him her hand out of the window.

He was inclined to be angry, but the look that accompanied the invitation did its work satisfactorily.

"He is very young," thought Maria Consuelo, as she drove away.

"She can be very amusing. It is worth while," said Orsino to himself as he passed in front of the next carriage, and walked out upon the small square.

He had not gone far, hindered as he was at every step, when some one touched his arm. It was Spicca, looking more cadaverous and exhausted than usual.

"Are you going home in a cab?" he asked. "Then let us go together."

They got out of the square, scarcely knowing how they had accomplished the feat. Spicca seemed nervous as well as tired, and he leaned on Orsino's arm.

"There was a chance lost this morning," said the latter when they were under the colonnade. He felt sure of a bitter answer from the keen old man.

"Why did you not seize it then?" asked Spicca. "Do you expect old men like me to stand up and yell for a republic, or a restoration, or a monarchy, or whichever of the other seven plagues of Egypt you desire? I have not voice enough left to call

a cab, much less to howl down a kingdom."

"I wonder what would have happened if I, or some one else, had tried."

"You would have spent the night in prison with a few kindred spirits. After all, that would have been better than making love to old Donna Tullia and her young friend."

Orsino laughed.

"You have good eyes," he said.

"So have you, Orsino. Use them. You will see something odd if you look where you were looking this morning. Do you know what sort of a place this world is?"

"It is a dull place. I have found that out already."

"You are mistaken. It is hell. Do you mind calling that cab?"

Orsino stared a moment at his companion, and then hailed the passing conveyance.

## CHAPTER VI.

ORSINO had shown less anxiety to see Madame d'Aranjuez than might perhaps have been expected. In the ten days which had elapsed between the sitting at Gouache's studio and the first of January he had only once made an attempt to find her at home, and that attempt had failed. He had not even seen her passing in the street, and he had not been conscious of any uncontrollable desire to catch a glimpse of her at any price.

But he had not forgotten her existence, as he would certainly have forgotten that of a wholly indifferent person in the same time. On the contrary, he had thought of her frequently and had indulged in many speculations concerning her, wondering among other matters why he did not take more trouble to see her since she occupied his thoughts so much. He did not know that he was in reality hesitating, for he would not have acknowledged to himself that he could be in danger of falling seriously in love. He was too young

to admit such a possibility, and the character which he admired and meant to assume was altogether too cold and superior to such weaknesses. To do him justice, he was really not of the sort to fall in love at first sight. Persons capable of a self-imposed dualism rarely are, for the second nature they build up on the foundation of their own is never wholly artificial. The disposition to certain modes of thought and habits of bearing is really present, and is sufficiently proved by their admiration of both. Very shy persons, for instance, invariably admire very self-possessed ones, and in trying to imitate them occasionally exhibit a cold-blooded arrogance which is amazing. Timothy Titmouse secretly looks up to Don Juan as his ideal, and after half a lifetime of failure outdoes his model, to the horror of his friends. Dionysus masks as Hercules, and the fox is sometimes not unsuccessful in his saint's disguise. To be short, Orsino Saracinesca was too enthusiastic to be wholly cold, and too thoughtful to be thoroughly enthusiastic. He saw things differently according to his moods, and being dissatisfied, he tried to make one mood prevail constantly over the other. In a mean nature the double view often makes an untruthful individual; in one possessing honourable instincts it frequently leads to unhappiness. Affectation then becomes aspiration, and the man's failure to impose on others is forgotten in his misery at failing to impose upon himself.

The few words Orsino had exchanged with Maria Consuelo on the morning of the great ceremony recalled vividly the pleasant hour he had spent with her ten days earlier, and he determined to see her as soon as possible. He was out of conceit with himself and consequently with all those who knew him, and he looked forward with pleasure to the conversation of an attractive woman who could have no preconceived opinion of him, and who could take him at his own estimate. He was curious,

too, to find out something more definite in regard to her. She was mysterious, and the mystery pleased him. She had admitted that her deceased husband had spoken of being connected with the Saracinesca, but he could not discover where the relationship lay. Spicca's very odd remark, too, seemed to point to her in some way which Orsino could not understand, and he remembered her having said that she had heard of Spicca. Her husband had doubtless been an Italian of Spanish descent, but she had given no clue to her own nationality, and she did not look Spanish, in spite of her name, Maria Consuelo. As no one in Rome knew her it was impossible to get any information whatever. It was all very interesting.

Accordingly, late on the afternoon of the second of January, Orsino called and was led to the door of a small sitting-room on the second floor of the hotel. The servant shut the door behind him and Orsino found himself alone. A lamp with a pretty shade was burning on the table and beside it an ugly blue glass vase contained a few flowers, common roses, but fresh and fragrant. Two or three new books in yellow paper covers lay scattered upon the hideous velvet table-cloth, and beside one of them Orsino noticed a magnificent paper-cutter of chiselled silver, bearing a large monogram done in brilliants and rubies. The thing contrasted oddly with its surroundings and attracted the light. An easy chair was drawn up to the table, an abominable object covered with perfectly new yellow satin. A small red morocco cushion, of the kind used in travelling, was balanced on the back, and there was a depression in it, as though some one's head had lately rested there.

Orsino noticed all these details as he stood waiting for Madame d'Aranjuez to appear, and they were not without interest to him, for each one told a story, and the stories were contradictory. The room was not encumbered with those numberless objects

which most women scatter about them within an hour after reaching an hotel. Yet Madame d'Aranjuez must have been at least a month in Rome. The room smelt neither of perfume nor of cigarettes, but of the roses, which was better, and a little of the lamp, which was much worse. The lady's only possessions seemed to be three books, a travelling cushion, and a somewhat too gorgeous paper-cutter; and these few objects were perfectly new. He glanced at the books; they were of the latest, and only one had been cut. The cushion might have been bought that morning. Not a breath had tarnished the polished blade of the silver knife.

A door opened softly and Orsino drew himself up as some one pushed in the heavy, vivid curtains. But it was not Madame d'Aranjuez. A small dark woman of middle age, with down-cast eyes and exceedingly black hair, came forward a step.

"The signora will come presently," she said in Italian, in a very low voice, as though she were almost afraid of hearing herself speak.

She was gone in a moment, as noiselessly as she had come. This was evidently the silent maid of whom Gouache had talked. The few words she had spoken had revealed to Orsino the fact that she was an Italian from the north, for she had the unmistakable accent of the Piedmontese, whose own language is comprehensible only by themselves.

Orsino prepared to wait some time, supposing that the message could hardly have been sent without an object. But another minute had not elapsed before Maria Consuelo herself appeared. In the soft lamplight her clear white skin looked very pale and her auburn hair almost red. She wore one of those nondescript garments which we have elected to call tea-gowns, and Orsino, who had learned to criticise dress as he had learned Latin grammar, saw that the tea-gown was good and the lace real. The colours produced no impression upon him what-

ever. As a matter of fact they were dark, being combined in various shades of olive.

Maria Consuelo looked at her visitor and held out her hand, but said nothing. She did not even smile, and Orsino began to fancy that he had chosen an unfortunate moment for his visit.

"It was very good of you to let me come," he said, waiting for her to sit down.

Still she said nothing. She placed the red morocco cushion carefully in the particular position which would be most comfortable, turned the shade of the lamp a little which, of course, produced no change whatever in the direction of the light, pushed one of the books half across the table, and at last sat down in the easy chair. Orsino sat down near her, holding his hat upon his knee. He wondered whether she had heard him speak, or whether she might not be one of those people who are painfully shy when there is no third person present.

"I think it was very good of you to come," she said at last, when she was comfortably settled.

"I wish goodness were always so easy," answered Orsino with alacrity.

"Is it your ambition to be good?" asked Maria Consuelo with a smile.

"It should be. But it is not a career."

"Then you do not believe in saints?"

"Not until they are canonised and made articles of belief—unless you are one, madame."

"I have thought of trying it," answered Maria Consuelo calmly. "Saintship is a career, even in society, whatever you may say to the contrary. It has attractions, after all."

"Not equal to those of the other side. Every one admits that. The majority is evidently in favour of sin, and if we are to believe in modern institutions, we must believe that majorities are right."

"Then the hero is always wrong, for he is the enthusiastic individual



who is always for facing odds, and if no one disagrees with him he is very unhappy. Yet there are heroes——”

“Where?” asked Orsino. “The heroes people talk of ride bronze horses on inaccessible pedestals. When the bell rings for a revolution they are all knocked down and new ones are set up in their places—also executed by the best artists—and the old ones are cast into cannon to knock to pieces the ideas they invented. That is called history.”

“You take a cheerful and encouraging view of the world’s history, Don Orsino.”

“The world is made for us, and we must accept it. But we may criticise it. There is nothing to the contrary in the contract.”

“In the social contract? Are you going to talk to me about Jean-Jacques?”

“Have you read him, madame?”

“‘No woman who respects herself ——’” began Maria Consuelo, quoting the famous preface.

“I see that you have,” said Orsino, with a laugh. “I have not.”

“Nor I.”

To Orsino’s surprise, Madame d’Aranjuez blushed. He could not have told why he was pleased, nor why her change of colour seemed so unexpected.

“Speaking of history,” he said, after a very slight pause, “why did you thank me yesterday for having got you a card?”

“Did you not speak to Gouache about it?”

“I said something—I forget what. Did he manage it?”

“Of course. I had his wife’s place. She could not go. Do you dislike being thanked for your good offices? Are you so modest as that?”

“Not in the least, but I hate misunderstandings, though I will get all the credit I can for what I have not done, like other people. When I saw that you knew the Del Ferice, I thought that perhaps she had been exerting herself.”

“Why do you hate her so?” asked Maria Consuelo.

“I do not hate her. She does not exist—that is all.”

“Why does she not exist, as you call it? She is a very good-natured woman. Tell me the truth. Everybody hates her—I saw that by the way they bowed to her while we were waiting—why? There must be a reason. Is she a—an incorrect person?”

Orsino laughed.

“No. That is the point at which existence is more likely to begin than to end.”

“How cynical you are! I do not like that. Tell me about Madame Del Ferice.”

“Very well. To begin with, she is a relation of mine.”

“Seriously?”

“Seriously. Of course that gives me a right to handle the whole dictionary of abuse against her.”

“Of course. Are you going to do that?”

“No. You would call me cynical. I do not like you to call me by bad names, madame.”

“I had an idea that men liked it,” observed Maria Consuelo gravely.

“One does not like to hear disagreeable truths.”

“Then it is the truth? Go on. You have forgotten what we were talking about.”

“Not at all. Donna Tullia, my second, third, or fourth cousin, was married once upon a time to a certain Mayer.”

“And left him? How interesting!”

“No, madame. He left her—very suddenly, I believe—for another world. Better or worse? Who can say? Considering his past life, worse, I suppose; but considering that he was not obliged to take Donna Tullia with him, decidedly better.”

“You certainly hate her. Then she married Del Ferice.”

“Then she married Del Ferice—before I was born. She is fabulously old. Mayer left her very rich, and

without conditions. Del Ferice was an impossible person. My father nearly killed him in a duel once—also before I was born. I never knew what it was about. Del Ferice was a spy, in the old days when spies got a living in a Rome——”

“Ah! I see it all now!” exclaimed Maria Consuelo. “Del Ferice is White, and you are Black. Of course you hate each other. You need not tell me any more.”

“How you take that for granted!”

“Is it not perfectly clear? Do not talk to me of like and dislike when your dreadful parties have anything to do with either! Besides, if I had any sympathy with either side it would be for the Whites. But the whole thing is absurd, complicated, medieval, feudal—anything you like except sensible. Your intolerance is—intolerable.”

“True tolerance should tolerate even intolerance,” observed Orsino smartly.

“That sounds like one of the puzzles of pronunciation like ‘*in un piatto poco cupo poco pepe pisto cape*,’” laughed Maria Consuelo. “Tolerably tolerable tolerance tolerates tolerable tolerance intolerably——”

“You speak Italian?” asked Orsino, surprised by her glib enunciation of the difficult sentence she had quoted. “Why are we talking a foreign language?”

“I cannot really speak Italian. I have an Italian maid who speaks French. But she taught me that puzzle.”

“It is odd—your maid is a Piedmontese and you have a good accent.”

“Have I? I am very glad. But tell me, is it not absurd that you should hate these people as you do—you cannot deny it—merely because they are Whites?”

“Everything in life is absurd if you take the opposite point of view. Lunatics find endless amusement in watching sane people.”

“And, of course, you are the sane people,” observed Maria Consuelo.

“Of course.”

“What becomes of me? I suppose

I do not exist? You would not be rude enough to class me with the lunatics.”

“Certainly not. You will of course choose to be a Black.”

“In order to be discontented, as you are?”

“Discontented?”

“Yes. Are you not utterly out of sympathy with your surroundings? Are you not hampered at every step by a network of traditions which have no meaning to your intelligence, but which are laid on you like a harness upon a horse, and in which you are driven your daily little round of tiresome amusement—or dissipation? Do you not hate the Corso as an omnibus horse hates it? Do you not really hate the very faces of all those people who effectually prevent you from using your own intelligence, your own strength—your own heart? One sees it in your face. You are too young to be tired of life. No, I am not going to call you a boy, though I am older than you, Don Orsino. You will find people enough in your own surroundings to call you a boy—because you are not yet so utterly tamed and wearied as they are, and for no other reason. You are a man. I do not know your age, but you do not talk as boys do. You are a man—then be a man altogether, be independent—use your hands for something better than throwing mud at other people’s houses merely because they are new!”

Orsino looked at her in astonishment. This was certainly not the sort of conversation he had anticipated when he had entered the room.

“You are surprised because I speak like this,” she said after a short pause. “You are a Saracinesca and I am—a stranger, here to-day and gone to-morrow, whom you will probably never see again. It is amusing, is it not? Why do you not laugh?”

Maria Consuelo smiled and as usual her strong red lips closed as soon as she had finished speaking, a habit which lent the smile something unusual, half-mysterious, and self-contained.

"I see nothing to laugh at," answered Orsino. "Did the mythological personage whose name I have forgotten laugh when the sphinx proposed the riddle to him?"

"That is the third time within the last few days that I have been compared to a sphinx by you or Gouache. It lacks originality in the end."

"I was not thinking of being original. I was too much interested. Your riddle is the problem of my life."

"The resemblance ceases there. I cannot eat you up if you do not guess the answer—or if you do not take my advice. I am not prepared to go so far as that."

"Was it advice? It sounded more like a question."

"I would not ask one when I am sure of getting no answer. Besides, I do not like being laughed at."

"What has that to do with the matter? Why imagine anything so impossible?"

"After all—perhaps it is more foolish to say, 'I advise you to do so and so,' than to ask, 'Why do you not do so and so?' Advice is always disagreeable and the adviser is always more or less ridiculous. Advice brings its own punishment."

"Is that not cynical?" asked Orsino.

"No. Why? What is the worst thing you can do to your social enemy? Prevail upon him to give you his counsel, act upon it—it will of course turn out badly—then say, 'I feared this would happen, but as you advised me I did not like——' and so on! That is simple and always effectual. Try it."

"Not for worlds!"

"I did not mean with me," answered Maria Consuelo with a laugh.

"No. I am afraid there are other reasons which will prevent me from making a career for myself," said Orsino thoughtfully.

Maria Consuelo saw by his face that the subject was a serious one with him, as she had already guessed that it must be, and one which would always interest him. She therefore

let it drop, keeping it in reserve in case the conversation flagged.

"I am going to see Madame Del Ferice to-morrow," she observed, changing the subject.

"Do you think that is necessary?"

"Since I wish it! I have not your reasons for avoiding her."

"I offended you the other day, madame, did I not? You remember—when I offered my services in a social way."

"No—you amused me," answered Maria Consuelo coolly, and watching to see how he would take the rebuke.

But, young as Orsino was, he was a match for her in self-possession.

"I am very glad," he answered without a trace of annoyance. "I feared you were displeased."

Maria Consuelo smiled again, and her momentary coldness vanished. The answer delighted her, and did more to interest her in Orsino than fifty clever sayings could have done. she resolved to push the question a little further.

"I will be frank," she said.

"It is always best," answered Orsino, beginning to suspect that something very tortuous was coming. His disbelief in phrases of the kind, though originally artificial, was becoming profound.

"Yes, I will be quite frank," she repeated. "You do not wish me to know the Del Ferice and their set, and you do wish me to know the people you like."

"Evidently."

"Why should I not do as I please?"

She was clearly trying to entrap him into a foolish answer, and he grew more and more wary.

"It would be very strange if you did not," answered Orsino without hesitation.

"Why, again?"

"Because you are absolutely free to make your own choice."

"And if my choice does not meet with your approval?" she asked.

"What can I say, madame? I and my friends will be the losers, not you."

Orsino had kept his temper admirably, and he did not suffer a hasty word to escape his lips nor a shadow of irritation to appear in his face. Yet she had pressed him in a way which was little short of rude. She was silent for a few seconds, during which Orsino watched her face as she turned it slightly away from him and from the lamp. In reality he was wondering why she was not more communicative about herself, and speculating as to whether her silence in that quarter proceeded from the consciousness of a perfectly assured position in the world, or from the fact that she had something to conceal; and this idea led him to congratulate himself upon not having been obliged to act immediately upon his first proposal by bringing about an acquaintance between Madame d'Aranjuez and his mother. This uncertainty lent a spice of interest to the acquaintance. He knew enough of the world already to be sure that Maria Consuelo was born and bred in that state of life to which it has pleased Providence to call the social elect. But the peculiar people sometimes do strange things, and afterwards establish themselves in foreign cities where their doings are not likely to be known for some time. Not that Orsino cared what this particular stranger's past might have been. But he knew that his mother would care very much indeed, if Orsino wished her to know the mysterious lady, and would sift the matter very thoroughly before asking her to the Palazzo Saracinesca. Donna Tullia, on the other hand, had committed herself to the acquaintance on her own responsibility, evidently taking it for granted that if Orsino knew Madame d'Aranjuez, the latter must be socially irreproachable. It amused Orsino to imagine the fat countess's rage if she turned out to have made a mistake.

"I shall be the loser too," said Maria Consuelo, in a different tone, "if I make a bad choice. But I cannot draw back. I took her to her house in my carriage. She seemed to

take a fancy to me——" she laughed a little.

Orsino smiled, as though to imply that the circumstance did not surprise him.

"And she said she would come to see me. As a stranger I could not do less than insist upon making the first visit, and I named the day—or rather she did. I am going to-morrow."

"To-morrow? Tuesday is her day. You will meet all her friends."

"Do you mean to say that people still have days in Rome?" Maria Consuelo did not look pleased.

"Some people do—very few. Most people prefer to be at home one evening in the week."

"What sort of people are Madame Del Ferice's friends?"

"Excellent people."

"Why are you so cautious?"

"Because you are about to be one of them, madame."

"Am I? No, I will not begin another catechism! You are too clever—I shall never get a direct answer from you."

"Not in that way," answered Orsino with a frankness that made his companion smile.

"How then?"

"I think you would know how," he replied gravely, and he fixed his young black eyes on her with an expression that made her half close her own.

"I should think you would make a good actor," she said softly.

"Provided that I might be allowed to be sincere between the acts."

"That sounds well. A little ambiguous perhaps. Your sincerity might or might not take the same direction as the part you had been acting."

"That would depend entirely upon yourself, madame."

This time Maria Consuelo opened her eyes instead of closing them.

"You do not lack—what shall I say?—a certain assurance. You do not waste time!"

She laughed merrily, and Orsino laughed with her.

"We are between the acts now," he said. "The curtain goes up to-morrow and you join the enemy."

"Come with me, then."

"In your carriage? I shall be enchanted."

"No. You know I do not mean that. Come with me to the enemy's camp. It will be very amusing."

Orsino shook his head.

"I would rather die—if possible, at your feet, madame."

"Are you afraid to call upon Madame Del Ferice?"

"More than of death itself."

"How can you say that?"

"The conditions of the life to come are doubtful—there might be a chance for me. There is no doubt at all as to what would happen if I went to see Madame Del Ferice."

"Is your father so severe with you?" asked Maria Consuelo with a little scorn.

"Alas, madame, I am not sensitive to ridicule," answered Orsino, quite unmoved. "I grant that there is something wanting in my character."

Maria Consuelo had hoped to find a weak point, and had failed, though indeed there were many in the young man's armour. She was a little annoyed, both at her own lack of judgment and because it would have amused her to see Orsino in an element so unfamiliar to him as that in which Donna Tullia lived.

"And there is nothing which would induce you to go there?" she asked.

"At present—nothing," Orsino answered coldly.

"At present—but in the future of all possible possibilities?"

"I shall undoubtedly go there. It is only the unforeseen which invariably happens."

"I think so too."

"Of course. I will illustrate the proverb by bidding you good-evening," said Orsino, laughing as he rose. "By this time the conviction must have formed itself in your mind that I was

never going. The unforeseen happens. I go."

Maria Consuelo would have been glad if he had stayed even longer, for he amused her and interested her, and she did not look forward with pleasure to the lonely evening she was to spend in the hotel.

"I am generally at home at this hour," she said, giving him her hand.

"Then, if you will allow me! Thanks. Good-evening, madame."

Their eyes met for a moment, and then Orsino left the room. As he lit his cigarette in the porch of the hotel, he said to himself that he had not wasted his hour, and he was pleasantly conscious of that inward and spiritual satisfaction which every very young man feels when he is aware of having appeared at his best in the society of a woman alone. Youth without vanity is only premature old age after all.

"She is certainly more than pretty," he said to himself, affecting to be critical when he was indeed convinced. "Her mouth is fabulous, but it is well shaped and the rest is perfect—no, the nose is insignificant, and one of those yellow eyes wanders a little. These are not perfections. But what does it matter? The whole is charming, whatever the parts may be. I wish she would not go to that horrible fat woman's tea to-morrow."

Such were the observations which Orsino thought fit to make to himself, but which by no means represented all that he felt, for they took no notice whatever of that extreme satisfaction at having talked well with Maria Consuelo, which in reality dominated every other sensation just then. He was well enough accustomed to consideration, though his only taste of society had been enjoyed during the winter vacations of the last two years. He was not the greatest match in the Roman matrimonial market for nothing, and he was perfectly well aware of his advantages in this respect. He possessed that keen, business-like appreciation of his value as a marriageable man which seems to characterise



the young generation of to-day, and he was not mistaken in his estimate. It was made sufficiently clear to him at every turn that he had but to ask in order to receive. But he had not the slightest intention of marrying at one-and-twenty as several of his old schoolfellows were doing, and he was sensible enough to foresee that his position as a desirable son-in-law would soon cause him more annoyance than amusement.

Madame d'Aranjuez was doubtless aware that she could not marry him if she wished to do so. She was several years older than he—he admitted the fact rather reluctantly—she was a widow, and she seemed to have no particular social position. These were excellent reasons against matrimony, but they were also equally excellent reasons for being pleased with himself at having produced a favourable impression on her.

He walked rapidly along the crowded street, glancing carelessly at the people who passed and at the brilliantly lighted windows of the shops. He passed the door of the club, where he was already becoming known for rather reckless play, and he quite forgot that a number of men were probably spending an hour at the tables before dinner, a fact which would hardly have escaped his memory if he had not been more than usually occupied with pleasant thoughts. He did not need the excitement of baccarat nor the stimulus of brandy and soda-water, for his brain

was already both excited and stimulated, though he was not at once aware of it. But it became clear to him when he suddenly found himself standing before the steps of the Capitol in the gloomy square of the Ara Cœli, wondering what in the world had brought him so far out of his way.

"What a fool I am!" he exclaimed impatiently, as he turned back and walked in the direction of his home. "And yet she told me that I would make a good actor. They say that an actor should never be carried away by his part."

At dinner that evening he was alternately talkative and very silent.

"Where have you been to-day, Orsino?" asked his father, looking at him curiously.

"I spent half an hour with Madame d'Aranjuez, and then went for a walk," answered Orsino with sudden indifference.

"What is she like?" asked Corona.

"Clever—at least in Rome." There was an odd, nervous sharpness about the answer.

Old Saracinesca raised his keen eyes without lifting his head and looked hard at his grandson. He was a little bent in his great old age.

"The boy is in love!" he exclaimed abruptly, and a laugh that was still deep and ringing followed the words. Orsino recovered his self-possession and smiled carelessly.

Corona was thoughtful during the remainder of the meal.

*(To be continued.)*

## THE BEAUTIFUL AND THE TRUE.

THE apostles of University Extension are conscious, it is to be presumed, that there are some things to be said against their mission, and that there are some people who say them. It is not now my purpose to repeat these things. For the present, ignoring both that which is plainly mischievous and that which may only tend to breed mischief, I wish to cordially acknowledge whatever is good in a scheme for which its staunchest supporters will hardly as yet claim perfection. Let it be cheerfully granted then that a little knowledge is not always and inevitably a dangerous thing. Let it be granted that it is better to know something even at second hand of the great men on whose shoulders we have climbed to our present position, than to proceed "in facetious and rejoicing ignorance" of who they were, when they lived, and what they did. It is at least well to impress on the rising generation that there have been poets before Lord Tennyson and prose-writers before Mr. Ruskin, painters before Mr. Sargent and playwrights before Mr. Pinero; that fiction did not begin with Mr. George Meredith, nor criticism with Mr. Pater; that the foundations of philosophy were not laid by the author of *First Principles*, nor the foundations of theology by the authors of *Lux Mundi*. In short, all teaching may be fruitful which tends to convey the great truth that the words *Let there be Light* were spoken before the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Let this much, then, be granted. Nor need those who grant it abandon their original position, that to know a few things well is better for man, in whatsoever rank of life he be born, for whatsoever work in life he may be bred, than to know many things ill. But art is long, time is short, the

desire of the moth for the star is pressing. If we cannot do the thing that we would, let us do, so well as may be, the thing that we can. The Duke of Wellington, honest man, did not approve of the Reform Bill; but he preferred even the Reform Bill to Civil War.

Among the gentlemen who at the close of last year waited on the President of the Privy Council to bespeak the aid of Government for University Extension were some over whom the Plain Man may possibly shake his head. Their names will hardly suggest to him the virtues of prudence, moderation, sanity, all that the wise Greek comprehended in the word *σωφροσύνη*—virtues so excellent in themselves, so preeminently needful for all entrusted with the training of the young idea. But among them was one to whom all must listen with respect. There is no man living better qualified than Mr. Jebb to form and express an opinion on all matters of education and learning. He made the best case possible for his colleagues. The scheme, it is known, works mainly, or at least largely, by means of local lectures, which are said to penetrate into districts where the schools and colleges now supported by Government cannot reach; and it was for these lectures that the State-grant was asked. The encouragement recently given by Government to scientific studies had, it was averred, reacted somewhat harmfully upon history and literature. If the great impetus given to science should throw history and literature into the background the primary object of these lectures would be defeated. That object, said Mr. Jebb, was not to train skilled artisans or specialists in any branch of knowledge, but to raise the whole education of the citizen. to

enlarge his mental horizon, to draw out his powers of thought and imagination, to render his patriotism more intelligent, and his conception of life more fruitful. For that purpose the study of history and literature supplied elements for which no satisfactory substitute could be found. This is kindly meant and well expressed. It may indeed be that its wisdom is less certain than its kindliness. There are citizens in this great State to whom this enlarging and fructifying process might not be much more useful than the pair of lace ruffles were to the unfortunate who wanted a shirt. But doubtless it is not proposed to draw them all into the same net; and with the design itself, apart from its application, no fault can be found. What a masterstroke of policy too is that, *to render his patriotism more intelligent.* What Conservative Government could look coldly on a scheme that is bound to make every citizen a Conservative? To be sure Lord Cranbrook was forced to explain that he could make no promises, and that in fact neither the power of giving nor of withholding aid was in his hands. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was, he intimated, the proper person to apply to; and that functionary, though he happens in the present instance to be one who would never discourage any plan for genuine education, has not unlimited funds at his disposal. Lord Cranbrook's attitude was in short much like that of the statesman in the Enchanted Palace who "smiling put the question by." Perhaps the deputation did not expect much else. There was a certain vagueness about their proposals which suggested rather a general wish that something might be done, than a definite plan of anything that could be done. But that the deputation thought it worth their while to address the Government on the subject at all, and the general tenor of the answer they received, help to set the scheme on a sounder base than it has yet perhaps found in public estimation, and serve to raise it out of the region

of mere experiment into a more practical sphere. It becomes its promoters therefore to look more warily than ever to their steps, to be more than ever careful that the place they claim in the universal scheme of education should be grounded on right reason, that it should really work to those useful ends which Mr Jebb has defined for it.

It appears from Lord Cranbrook's answer that he had prepared himself to receive the deputation by the perusal of sundry books which they had caused to be sent to him beforehand. The University Extension Movement has quite a little library of its own now, as everyone knows. I wonder whether among the books selected for his lordship's information was one on *The Philosophy of the Beautiful*, prepared by Professor Knight of St. Andrew's University, and lately published by Mr. Murray, if his lordship read it, and whether he considered it to come under the head of the "kind of instruction which everybody agrees is most valuable and has been most valuable throughout the country." Lord Cranbrook saw and confessed a difficulty in the gap between the little students swept in by the Government net of elementary education and those of a larger growth to whom the University Extension lectures appeal; the former range from four to thirteen years, the latter from seventeen years onward. "You have," said he, "an enormous gap to fill up, and at present I can hardly imagine that your Oxford and Cambridge Extension scheme touches anything more than the mere skirt of those who are to be brought in from the mere elementary schools. Your students must be those who have had some kind of education, of a different kind and beyond that given in the elementary school, in order that they may be in a condition to profit by the sort of instruction which you give." Did the instruction given in *The Philosophy of the Beautiful* strike his lordship, I wonder, as the sort by which these students were likely to profit?

The little volume grew out of a course of lectures delivered first to the Philosophical Institution of Edinburgh, and afterwards to audiences of University Extension students in London and Cheltenham. They were originally preceded by an attempt at a constructive theory of the Philosophy of Beauty. But this Professor Knight has deemed it expedient to omit—very wisely, as I venture to think—and has preferred to confine himself in the main to a historical sketch of past opinion and tendency. He has shown in his preface many good reasons for his judgment; one being—for the Professor is nothing if not candid—that many people, “philosophers of renown” and by no means inappreciative of beauty, deny that “any satisfactory conclusion can be reached in the field of æsthetics”, think, to put it familiarly, that this way mystification, if not madness, lies. “They point to the discord of the schools, their rival theories, the vagueness of argument—a maximum of debate with a minimum of result. They remind us how it was the ambition of every aspirant in philosophy, in his undergraduate days, to solve the problem of the Beautiful; and they say, with the astronomer-poet of Persia, Omar Khayyám—

Myself when young did eagerly frequent  
Doctor and Saint, and heard great argu-  
ment

About it and about; but evermore  
Came out, by the same door, where in I  
went.”

There is much to be said for this sort of philosophers. On many sides the world might be both a happier and a wiser place if more of its inhabitants were content “to theorize no longer, to give up the philosophic quest, and return to the earlier state of mere reciprocity and enjoyment.” Professor Knight admits the problem to be perennial; there is no final goal. “We at present stand upon a small (occasionally sunlit) promontory, stretching out from the land of primal mystery whence we came, into the ocean of a still vaster ignor-

ance, over which we must set out.” Nevertheless to record all the theoretic guesses, conjectures, and approximate solutions is valuable, not only because they form links in a chain that shall never be completed, but because they are also “the progressive unfolding of the Universal Reason, which immeasurably transcends that of the individual and is nevertheless its deepest essence.” And it has yet another value, which may perhaps be more generally intelligible to the individual reason, and which mine at least does most cordially accept: “Accurate knowledge of previous speculation is always our best guide to the study of a problem that is perennial; and while the history of Philosophy shows that the most perfect theory is doomed to oblivion no less certainly than the imperfect ones, and that they all revive after temporary extinction, *we can contribute nothing of value to the controversies of our time by striving after an originality that dispenses with the past.*” If not absolutely beautiful the passage here italicised is most certainly true and good; it might, let me observe in passing, be recommended to the attention of certain members of the New English Art Club; and the right study of the Beautiful we are wisely (and assuredly not superfluously) reminded, must inevitably lead to the Good and True. The Professor claims for it that it is likely to prove, that in fact it has been found to prove, a corrective to cynicism, and he quotes the words put by Matthew Arnold in Goethe’s mouth:

The end is everywhere,  
Art still has truth, take refuge there!

It is obvious [he says] that the study cannot be either begun or carried on in the *nil admirari* mood of the cynic. Even when the search for “first principles” has been abandoned, metaphysics given up, and the “categorical imperative” deemed baseless, a reliable footing has been found in the sphere of the Beautiful, whence a way may be discovered leading back into that of the True and the Good. Certainly some have found it possible, after the disintegration of belief in the intellectual and moral sphere, to resist further loss by hold-

ing fast to what can be proved within the sphere of Art; and they have afterwards found some help in the solution of other problems by means of it. The light which it casts on the central enquiry of Theism, I hope to show in my second volume.

May it be permitted to hope that the forthcoming volume will not be included in the University Extension Library? Most curious and interesting it cannot fail to be; but the connection between Theism and the Beautiful will surely puzzle and hardly profit the budding student of seventeen. However, no one, whether seventeen or seventy, will dispute that it is better to believe even in a Philosophy of the Beautiful than to believe in nothing; and this I take to be the Professor's meaning.

And this brings me to a problem which perplexes me more than all the theories of the Philosophy of the Beautiful that have vexed the unquiet soul of man since Socrates imparted to Agathon's guests the doctrines of the wise Diotima. For what particular class of students is this little book designed; of what age will they be, of what training, of what sex almost I would ask? That no students will be under the age of seventeen may be gathered from Lord Cranbrook's speech; and though no further limit is assigned therein—and none probably is contemplated, for who is too old to learn?—it may reasonably be assumed that a general census of the lecture-rooms would show a strong preponderance of the young. A large proportion, perhaps the majority, will doubtless be girls, who—I speak not disrespectfully of lecturers or pupils—have no more pressing occupation for their happy idleness. But even among the more serious class of students the young must surely preponderate. The ambition and the energy of youth are needed to add the pursuit of culture to the daily struggle for existence; and the students whom this scheme aims at attracting will clearly be those to whom the first needs of existence do not come unlooked for.

It is a question, I cannot but think, whether the study of the Philosophy of the Beautiful will materially assist the objects of the movement as defined by Mr. Jebb. Heretics there are indeed who venture to doubt whether the study of Philosophy, as practised in the Schools of Oxford, is of much value to any class of mind, or that the human intelligence at any stage of its progress is materially benefited by, let us say, a knowledge of the "Amphiboly of the conceptions of the Reflection"; whether it does not rather suggest the notion of angels, ineffectual if not beautiful, vainly beating in the void no luminous wings. There have even been men, not unlearned nor unintelligent, who held that the philosophical is not the most precious part of the heritage bequeathed by Plato to the human race. But these are extreme opinions which I am concerned neither to maintain nor to refute. It is at least no extreme opinion to hold that the study of Philosophy is not one to be lightly taken up, either as the elegant distraction of an idle hour enjoyed alternately with dissertations upon Pre-Raphaelite painters or Victorian poets, or as a pleasant relief from the dry toil of the counting-house or the factory. In one of his essays on Mill's theory of Government, Macaulay comments on a sort of teaching which takes uneducated or ill-educated persons, "puts five or six phrases into their mouths, lends them an odd number of the Westminster Review, and in a month transforms them into philosophers." The recipe is not yet out of date, though the Review may be. But these cannot be the teachers, nor these the pupils whom Mr. Jebb had in his mind when he pleaded the cause of University Extension before Lord Cranbrook.

Yet it is hard to avoid an uneasy suspicion that some such result may follow from its pious labours, if this treatise on the Philosophy of the Beautiful may be taken as representing its general scope and method. I



say not a word against the execution of the book. What its composer designed to do, he has done as comprehensively as the nature of his subject and the limitations of his space allowed him. If he has not exactly attained to the praise given to the learned and judicious Richard Hooker, who "had a most blessed and clear method of demonstrating what he knew to the great advantage of all his pupils," we must remember that the fruits of more than two thousand years' speculation are not easily to be garnered in a little volume of some three hundred pages. My doubt is rather of the wisdom of the design. Aristotle confessed to a difficulty in determining how far it would profit a weaver or a carpenter in the exercise of his art to contemplate the ideal good; and, though of course the explanation may be forthcoming, no man need be ashamed to share the doubts of Aristotle. Will it, for instance, enlarge the mental horizon of the budding provincial Miss to hear that "the voice of beauty comes not to the soul in the form of a categorical imperative"? Will it render the young carpenter's conception of life more fruitful, or the young weaver's patriotism more intelligent, to read that "the sublime dynamic creates the beautiful, the sublime mathematic contains it"? What man or woman, young or old, in any class of life, at any period of their mental development, will be profited one jot or tittle by the information that when they look at a picture, or listen to a piece of music, they are only exercising the æsthetic impulse, and that the æsthetic impulse is only "the subjective concomitant of the normal amount of activity, not directly connected with life-serving function, in the peripheral end-organs of the cerebro-spinal nervous system"? Is this the Philosophy that Milton found divine and charming and musical as Apollo's lute? Can a perpetual feast of such sweets be good for any human digestion? If ever there were an illustration of

the cloud of words which darkens the face of learning it is surely here. I do not wish to exaggerate, and I may be wrong; but I do most strongly hold to the opinion that it would be impossible to compose in the English language a sentence more absolutely unintelligible to the Plain Man than this. Its composer possibly knew what he meant when he penned it, and Professor Knight of course knew when he transcribed it. But will either of them care to quote it as a sample of that "combination of scientific treatment with popularity" and of "simplicity with thoroughness" to which the "remarkable success which has attended University Extension in Britain" is ascribed? This, it should be said, is Mr. Grant Allen's contribution to the Philosophy of the Beautiful. Mr. Allen is a novelist, and as he has lately won the prize of a thousand pounds offered for the best novel by the proprietors of a weekly journal known as *Tit-Bits* (which might itself by the title be some University Extension Manual) he must be called a successful one. The Beautiful should be a complement of all good fiction; but if Mr. Allen carries his theory of the Beautiful into the composition of his novels, they must be very remarkable works. In a chain which stretches from Plato to Mr. Grant Allen there will be many links. The conjunction of the two names, with all the host that intervene, is ample proof of the judicial and catholic spirit in which Professor Knight has approached his subject. He advocates no theory, but examines all. He sums up the evidence of two thousand years, and presents it to the jury—but to a jury of whom?

By quoting passages detached from their context any form of human wisdom can, it may be said, be made to look foolish. The passages I have quoted have been taken as I found them, as the reader of this treatise will have to take them. Its very form necessitates the detachment of

passages from their context. To students of Philosophy who can themselves supply the context this will be no hardship. But to the others—the blank sheets of paper, whom this Manual is intended to prepare for the study of Philosophy, whom it is intended “to educate rather than to inform,”—how will it be with them? However, to avoid any suspicion of unfair dealing, I will take another passage, in which a complete theory of the Beautiful is presented to the young reader.

Hartmann’s theory of æsthetic beauty is expressed in the word *Schein* to which he gives a peculiar meaning. The æsthetic “shine” is not either in outward objects (landscape, air-vibrations, &c.) or in the mind. It is occasioned by outward objects, made by artists or otherwise, and is capable of summoning the “shine” before the mind of all normally constituted people. He talks of eye-shine, ear shine, imagination-shine [and moon-shine?] and in this shine only is beauty present. The subjective phenomenon alone is beautiful. No external reality is essential to it, provided only this æsthetic shine is set up by whatever means. In natural beauty however the shine cannot be dis severed from the reality. A painter sees the shine at once, as something different from the real objects; so may we, if, for example, we look at a landscape with inverted head! This plan, however, does not answer in a room. It is only the subjective phenomenon, however, absolved from reality, that makes an æsthetic relation possible.

The shine does not pretend to be *true* in any sense. We must avoid the expression “phenomenon,” “appearance” in connection with it, as this suggests objective reality, which is quite irrelevant. The shine is not a mental perception, it does not deal with an idea, “the idea of the beautiful”; and no supersensuous idea of the beautiful is at all necessary. In fact the pretensions of transcendental æsthetic have brought the study into disrepute. Shine is not the same as a picture, unless picture be taken in a psychical or intellectual sense; otherwise a picture is a real thing while shine is not. It is also to be distinguished from form.

As a picture stands to the thing pictured, a form stands to substance, so does æsthetic shine stand to the subject. The subject disappears before it; not only do the interests of self disappear, but the very ego itself. The subject disappears from the

subjective side of consciousness, and it emerges again on the objective side. The æsthetic shine is thus a disintegration of the ego, yet it is not an illusion. It is a reality of consciousness. Beauty reveals itself to us in a series of steps, but at the last it remains a mystery, and without mystery there would be no beauty.

Matthew Arnold, combating the harm done to Wordsworth’s fame by certain indiscreet disciples who persisted in praising the master’s work for its worst qualities—that is, not for its poetry, which is the reality, but for its philosophy, which is the illusion—quotes some dreadful lines prized by the devout Wordsworthian for the scientific system of thought contained in them:—

O for the coming of that glorious time  
When, prizing knowledge as her noblest  
wealth  
And best protection, this Imperial Realm,  
While she exacts allegiance, shall admit  
An obligation on her part to teach  
Them who are born to serve her and obey;  
Binding herself by statute to secure,  
For all the children whom her soil main-  
tains,  
The rudiments of letters, and inform  
The mind with moral and religious truth.

“One can hear them,” he cries, “being quoted at a Social Science Congress; one can call up the whole scene. A great room in one of our dismal provincial towns; dusty air and jaded afternoon daylight; benches full of men with bald heads and women in spectacles; an orator lifting up his face from a manuscript written within and without to declaim these lines of Wordsworth; and in the soul of any poor child of Nature who may have wandered in thither, an unutterable sense of lamentation, and mourning, and woe!” After reading this theory of the Beautiful, with all its wondrous talk about the *æsthetic shine* and the *disintegration of the ego*, one cannot help suspecting that there might be moments when a poor child of Nature might feel almost as much out of place at a University Extension Lecture as at a Social Science Congress.

Let me say it again, my quarrel,

or, for that is a harsh word, my doubt, is not of the wisdom of the book, but of the wisdom of offering it to minds that cannot in the nature of things be more than half trained, and whose training, such as it is, cannot surely have prepared them as yet to derive from these beautiful peradventures the profit that doubtless lurks in their mystic sentences for more matured intellects. Of course all the teaching in this little volume is not of a piece with that I have exhibited. Occasionally one comes upon a piece of plain common sense that to the poor child of Nature at least is as grateful as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. How refreshing, after running one's head against the "peripheral end-organs" of Mr. Allen, or standing on one's head to catch the "æsthetic shine" of the worthy Hartmann (a mode of philosophic research which, as Professor Knight justly warns his pupils, it were unadvisable to practise in a picture-gallery)—how refreshing, I say, after these facts to turn to Cicero's simple definition of beauty as "the apt configuration of body, with a certain delicacy of colour superadded"; or to Mr. Edward Tylor's candid confession of his inability to tell what led the primitive man to think a feather in the nose a beautiful appendage. How wholesome too is this, perhaps the most fruitful truth in the book to be impressed on the minds of the rising generation:

No nation has ever been at the time aware of its own artistic decline. Nay, its critics and art-workers have even sometimes interpreted, what posterity has seen to be a regress, as a forward movement, or as an ascent. This remark applies to national decadence, not only in art, but also in every other direction—in philosophy, in morals, in political life, and in religion.

Here we have Professor Knight himself, and we cannot wish to have him in a better vein. There is a text for a sermon on Our Noble Selves! But such periods of refreshment are, alas!

too few in this distracting chase after the eternal and unseizable shadow of the Beautiful.

It used to be made, and perhaps still in certain quarters is made, a reproach against Matthew Arnold that he went about the world preaching what he was pleased to call *culture* as the universal panacea for the failures and shortcomings of our nation. Mr. Frederic Harrison, in an angry moment, declared that "the very silliest cant of the day is the cant about culture." All cant is silly, as well as mischievous. But Arnold never canted about culture, though unfortunately he enabled others to do so. "Culture," Mr. Harrison continued, "is a desirable quality in a critic of new books, and sits well on a professor of *belles lettres*; but as applied to politics, it means simply a turn for small fault-finding, love of selfish ease, and indecision in action. The man of culture is one of the poorest creatures alive." If culture means this, then assuredly Mr. Harrison is right; and though of course true culture does not mean this—as Mr. Harrison must have known when his anger passed; for is he not himself a man of culture?—it may be owned that it will not by itself equip a man for the office of a political teacher, as others than Matthew Arnold have proved. But certainly Mr. Harrison was right when he poured his anathema on the cant about culture. The word has often been very idly and very mischievously used by some who have prated about it and professed to practise it. I will venture to quote what I wrote elsewhere on this subject some little while back:—

The chatter that went on a year or two ago upon the hundred best books was a notable instance of the cant about culture. It was impossible to look at the greater part of those lists, and of the well-meaning people who had drawn them up, without recalling that pithy sentence which Mr. Arnold has somewhere quoted from Bishop Butler, that in general no part of our time is more idly spent than the time spent in reading. Culture, as defined by Mr. Arnold is "to know the best that has been thought

and said in the world"; but this, like most definitions, is but half the truth. A knowledge of the best that has been thought and said in the world can only be acquired by reading; but reading alone will not avail without, as Burke said, "the power of diversifying the matter infinitely in your own mind, and of applying it to every occasion that arises." And culture must be relative. It is not every man who can, like Bacon, take all knowledge for his province. The spectacle of Visto toiling for a taste is much less pitiful than the struggle going on to-day among so many good creatures of both sexes for what they are pleased to call culture. Visto only made himself ridiculous; but these good souls, and especially the women, besides doing that most completely, do themselves also infinite harm. They perplex and unsettle themselves with subjects they cannot understand, and were never born to understand. They fill the vacant space of their heads with a mass of undigested, undiversified reading, which only disables them for the proper conduct of their own concerns. These are the disciples of false culture, and they are unhappily very common in this age of little books. And this false culture will make men the poorest creatures alive in all affairs.

When it is remembered who and what are to be the readers of this little Manual, for whom and what has been designed the system of teaching of which it is a part, what is their age, what has been their education, what will be the life they are being trained for, is there not some fear lest they be found one day to be poor creatures in their affairs? Is there not some fear lest the time they have spent in reading all these speculations on the Beautiful may be found to have been idly spent when the day comes, as it must come to all, for them to take their lives into their own hands? Some two centuries before Burke much the same warning was delivered by a homelier sage against the idea that mere reading by rote was all that was needed to make a wise man. In his essay on Pedantry,—an essay as sound as it is amusing—Montaigne is particularly severe on that sort of teaching which merely fills the memory without

reaching the understanding. "We can say, Cicero says this is, that these were the manners of Plato, and that these are the very words of Aristotle; but what do we say ourselves that is our own? What do we do? What do we judge? A parrot would say as much as that." As usual he borrows a quotation from his favourite Seneca to describe this sort of students: "*Non vitæ, sed scholæ discimus*; we learn not for our life, but for the school." Or, as he puts it in his own more full-flavoured phrase: "What avails it to have our bellies full of meat, if it be not digested?" Pupils so taught seem, he avers, to be distracted even from common sense.

Note but the plain husbandman or the unwily shoemaker, and you see them, simply and naturally plod on their course, speaking only of what they know, and no further; whereas these letter-puft pedants, because they would fain raise themselves aloft, and with their literal doctrine [mere book-learning] which floateth up and down the superficies of their brain, arm themselves beyond other men, they incessantly intricate and entangle themselves: they utter lofty words and speak golden sentences, but so that another man doth place, fit, and apply them. They are acquainted with Galen, but know not the disease.

And again:

Whosoever shall narrowly look into this kind of people, which far and wide hath spread itself, he shall find (as I have done) that for the most part they neither understand themselves nor others, and that their memory is many times sufficiently full fraught, but their judgment ever hollow and empty.

The teacher, he says elsewhere, who shall instruct the young after this fashion "shall breed but asses laden with books."

Montaigne was not used to mince his words, and Florio was at no great pains to soften them. I would fain end with a gentler teacher. Let me quote once more the object of the University Extension lecturer as defined in Mr. Jebb's words: *To raise the*

*whole education of the citizen, to enlarge his mental horizon, to draw out his powers of thought and imagination, to render his patriotism more intelligent, and his conception of life more fruitful.*

Will Professor Knight, or any other of the generous and learned gentlemen who are devoting their time and talents to this beneficent end, honestly say that they believe the path to it will be appreciably smoothed for any boy or

girl by reading that "the voice of beauty comes not to the soul in a categorical imperative," or that the love of the beautiful is only "the subjective concomitant of the normal amount of activity, not directly connected with life-serving function, in the peripheral end-organs of the cerebro-spinal nervous system" ?

MARK REID.



## OUR MILITARY UNREADINESS.

FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE REGIMENTAL OFFICER.

THE voice of the military critic has of late been heard in the land, and all who will listen have been told that the British army as an effective fighting machine exists no longer in the United Kingdom. With much that has been written on this subject every regimental officer cannot but most cordially agree. He knows, if any one does, where the shoe pinches. There is not an officer of twenty years' service who is not perfectly well aware that the powers of endurance, the discipline, and the general fitness for war of the soldiers in our home battalions have deteriorated lamentably since he first joined the service. All that has lately been proclaimed abroad as something new is but an echo of the mess-room talk of many years past; and so familiarised has the regimental officer become with the present condition of affairs that its public discussion has almost ceased to interest him. The lamentations so frequently heard ten or fifteen years ago on the part of the older officers seem now to have given place to the callousness of despair, as expressed in the formula but too often heard among infantry officers that, "Anything is better than regimental soldiering at home." A state of things more dangerous than that which such a feeling lays bare can hardly be conceived, implying, as it does, that officers have for some reason almost ceased to realise the responsibilities of their position.

"But what," it will be asked, "are these responsibilities if, as is so often asserted, the United Kingdom is practically safe from invasion so long as our navy holds command of the sea?" Such a question is easily answered. Our home battalions are in present circumstances but the nursery and the

school for the linked battalions abroad; and, just as the man reflects through life the training of his earlier days, so beyond question is it a fact that the soldier is made or marred during the period of instruction which he undergoes as a recruit. Then must be learnt those lessons of unquestioning obedience to his superiors, of implicit faith in and reliance on his officers, of honour and of love for sovereign, country, and regiment which go to make up that true discipline which is the very life of an army. Slackness or want of interest in his daily work, if once allowed to take firm root, can never afterwards be entirely eradicated. And not for the men in the ranks only is the home battalion the training-ground, but here also a large proportion of young officers acquire their first insight into their profession.

When once the fact has been fully grasped that it is on the condition of the battalions at home that the efficiency of our infantry all over the world directly depends, the terrible danger of allowing those battalions to remain in their present condition of unfitness for war becomes at once apparent. That the great majority of them are for all practical purposes most inefficient, no officer of any judgment, who knows what are the demands of modern war, will for one moment attempt to deny. Physically the men who compose them are unable to meet even the very moderate demands made on their endurance during our yearly manœuvres, when, be it remembered, they are not required to carry anything like the weight which would be necessary in war.

Bad as such a state of things undoubtedly is, there is at present a far more terrible fear lurking in the

minds of many officers, and especially of regimental officers. The discipline of our army is certainly not now what it once was. To prove or disprove such an assertion it is absolutely useless to turn, as is so frequently done, to records of punishments, for such records are capable of very varied interpretation. Mere dread of punishment is of all incentives to discipline the most unworthy and perhaps the weakest. In old days, it is true, when, as the Duke of Wellington used to say, the British army was composed of "the very scum of the earth," the cell and the lash played a more important part in maintaining discipline than happily they do now. But with all the brutal punishments of those days there existed other motives of a higher type which were conducive to true discipline in peace and war. Of these the most prominent were the blind confidence in his officers, bred of long association, and the almost too assertive pride of regiment which were such marked features in the long-service soldier. But what is our present position in this respect? The punishments awarded for "crime," as in military parlance all offences against discipline are termed, grow year by year less in number, while in point of severity they are not even to be compared with the penalties for wrong-doing endured by the past generation. That this should be the case would be a matter of congratulation were it certain that the quality of our discipline is as high now as it was then. With the younger, better educated, and more sober class of men who now enlist it is only natural to expect a diminution of "crime" of all sorts. There can, however, be but little doubt that many experienced officers are of opinion that certain offences are not now punished with the severity which they demand. Nor can it be doubted that the other incentives to discipline are not the same power that they once were. *Esprit de corps* is but a shadow of its old self, while no

one will pretend that the county or local feeling, which presumably is intended to take its place, has hitherto proved in any way an efficient substitute. It is, however, when we come to consider the existing relations between officers and their subordinates that the most serious cause for reflection presents itself. At a time when officers and men practically spent their lives in one regiment it was impossible but that they should in course of time gain a more or less intimate knowledge of each other; and with British soldiers mutual knowledge has, thank heaven! ever meant mutual confidence. The regiment was to all their home. But what is our position to-day in this respect? Literally almost before the young soldier has learnt the names of his officers he is shipped off to a hungry linked battalion in some foreign land. The company officers on their part make but little pretence of taking any interest in youths who come to-day and are gone to-morrow. And after all why should they do so? They are not responsible for the training of these youths, that being the sole concern of the adjutant and the serjeant-major. There is probably no human being on this earth more full of keenness and more fit to bear his modicum of responsibility than a healthy English youth fresh from a public school. And yet, if ever a system could be devised to destroy the natural keenness in him and to unfit him for bearing responsibility, that system is ours. Not only does he soon learn by experience that there is but little outlet for his energy in real soldiering, that is in training his men for war and for war only, but his observation teaches him that any great display of zeal on his part will entail more than his share of the necessary, but none the less dull, routine duties of barrack life. He who desires a somewhat more stirring existence will acquire for himself as rapidly as possible a reputation for knowing and caring for no-

thing military, for by this means most surely will be obtained the requisite leisure for the more congenial pursuits of the cricket-ground, the racecourse, or the hunting-field. Our friend, moreover, has the pleasurable feeling that, no matter how much he may neglect his duty, his chances of promotion in due course are as certain as are those of his less observant comrade, who vainly imagines that his daily presence at the door of the orderly-room is a benefit either to himself or to the men whom he aspires to influence. Exaggerated as such a picture may appear, it is unfortunately but too faithful a description of our present system of regimental administration in many infantry battalions. Here if anywhere will be found the cause of our present unreadiness for war, and of the lack of interest in his profession which the regimental officer is so freely abused for displaying.

In the officers and men of our line battalions England possesses to-day a raw material absolutely unequalled both for physique and individual intelligence in the armies of the Continent. This statement is indeed no mere ignorant blast of insular prejudice. It is a deliberate and honest opinion based on personal observation in favourable circumstances of both the French and the German armies; and it is a statement which may confidently be submitted to the judgment of all who have had opportunities of ascertaining what is the raw material of those armies. And yet those armies achieve in a few months results of physical and intellectual efficiency which appear almost incredible to us. What then is the cause?

The answer to this question is to be found in the words of a young Prussian regimental officer, who, after the war of 1866, ventured to raise his voice against an antiquated system of tactics which the traditions of his service had rendered sacred in the eyes of the older officers. "The captain commanding a company," writes Captain May in his *Tactical Retro-*

*spect*, "is the only officer between whom and the soldier a personal relation exists in peace time. He knows every individual soldier in the most intimate manner, and the soldier on his part is aware that his captain so knows him. It is upon this relation that the uncommon influence rests which he, above all other officers, has over the individual soldier, as well as over the whole company. The soldier sees his nearest home in his company, and he has, under all circumstances, a decided feeling for his captain, even though it be one of hatred. In most cases, however, it is a feeling of love, confidence, and respect . . . They [*i.e.*, the captain and his subordinate] become accustomed to one another, have their fits of ill-temper at times on both sides; but when at length the hour comes that they are finally to part, there is an earnest feeling of sorrow which cannot be suppressed. . . . The beautiful relation between the soldier and his captain is a cornerstone of our army, and not one of the least firm ones. The highest reward which the soldier can obtain during his service springs from his captain, namely the confidence of his company leader; and he, on his part, will find in the attachment of his subordinate the most precious reward which will fall to him in his lifetime."

In these words breathes the spirit which has made the German army what it is to-day—that spirit which Scharnhorst and the other great founders of the modern military system foresaw so plainly must exist, unless a short-service army was to become an empty delusion. The means employed to bring about this intimate relation between officers and men may be summed up in the one word *responsibility*.

The German captain has about fifty recruits handed over to him in November, and in some four months from that time he knows that they must have attained to a certain degree of efficiency, and that a high one, before they can be passed as trained

soldiers. The method of bringing them to this pitch of excellence is left entirely to the discretion of the individual officer.

The inspection of recruits is, in the German army, a great function, and often takes place in the presence of the general officer commanding the brigade, the division, or even the army-corps. On the results of this inspection the captain knows that his chances of promotion directly depend; or rather, he is fully aware that an unsatisfactory inspection in two or three successive years would of a certainty mean the loss of his commission. He further knows that before the following autumn, when the manœuvres take place, the whole of his company, about 140 strong, must be fit to march anywhere and do anything. It is this very real responsibility of the company officer which makes the German and the French armies the splendid fighting machines which they are, and there is absolutely no reason whatever why our home army should not be in every respect as efficient as they are. Let it once be laid down as a hard-and-fast rule that a smaller number than say fifty recruits shall never be sent from the depot to the home battalion; let them be posted entirely to one company; let some standard of efficiency, the higher the better, in drill, field-exercises, gymnastics, musketry, marching under conditions of war, the history of the country and of the regiment, be laid down by regulation as attainable in a given time; above all, let the captain be held personally responsible that this standard is attained, and it may confidently be predicted that the cry of short service having ruined our army will be heard no more. If, moreover, besides putting the responsibility for the training of his men on the cap-

tain, his disciplinary powers be widely extended, so that he, instead of the battalion commander as at present, shall become in all ordinary circumstances the dispenser of justice to his men, it is obvious that the relations between them must in future be of a more intimate character than in the past.

For twenty years we have been striving after the impossible. A regimental system centralised in a commanding officer, an adjutant, and a serjeant-major, however excellent it may have been when recruits were few, is in present circumstances a hopeless anachronism.

The energy which the company officer throws into his work during the too brief period of company training, when for a few weeks he feels that he is really preparing his men for war, is evidence of what might be expected were this the case throughout the year.

It is not asked that extra burdens, such as pay and clothing accounts, which can hardly be said to bring him nearer to his men, should be cast on his shoulders, for a nation such as England can well afford that such duties should be undertaken by a special staff. But it is imperatively demanded by the conditions of a short-service army that every officer shall from the day of joining feel that the discipline and the war-training of the men under him is his one essential duty—a duty which he must fulfil if he is to continue to serve Her Majesty. Thus and thus only can the discipline and the efficiency of the British army be made what they once were. Thus and thus only will Englishmen be once more in a position to ask the question so proudly put by Sir Charles Napier:—"How is it possible to defeat British troops?"

## THE VILLAGE LEGACY.

"THE case of Mussumât<sup>1</sup> Nuttia being without heirs," droned the Court-Inspector.

"Bring her in."

"She is already in the Presence. If the Protector of the Poor will rise somewhat,—at the other side of the table, *Huzoor!*—beside the yellow-trouserred legs of the guardian of peace,—that is Mussumât Nuttia."

A child some three years of age, with a string of big blue beads round her neck,—a child who had evidently had a very satisfying meal, and who was even now preserving its contour by half-a-yard of sugar-cane, stared gravely back at the Assistant Magistrate's grave face.

"She has no heirs of any kind?" he asked.

"None, *Huzoor!* Her mother was of the Harni tribe, working harvests in Bhâmaniwallah-khurd. There the misfortune of being eaten by a snake came upon her by the grace of God. Mussumât Nuttia therefore remains,—"

"Oh, Guardian of the Poor!" said two voices in unison, as two tall bearded figures swathed in whitish-brown draperies pressed a step forward with out-stretched petitioning hands. They had been awaiting this crisis all day long, with that mixture of tenacity and indifference which is seen on most faces in an Indian court.

"Give her in charge of the headmen of the village; they are responsible."

"Shelter of the world! 'tis falsely represented. The woman was a vagrant, a loose walker, a—"

"Is the order written? Then bring the next case."

<sup>1</sup> A title of courtesy equivalent to *cur mistress*.

One flourish of a pen, and Mussumât Nuttia became a village-legacy; the only immediate result being that having sucked one end of her sugar-cane dry, she began methodically on the other. Half-an-hour afterwards, mounted on a white pony, with pink eyes and nose and a dyed pink tail to match, she was on her way back to the cluster of reed huts dignified by the name of Bhâmaniwallah-khurd, or Little Bhâmaniwallah. Big Bhâmaniwallah lay a full mile to the northward, secured against midsummer floods by the high bank which stretched like a mud wall right across the Punjab plain, from the skirts of the hills to the great meeting of the five waters at Mittankote. But Little Bhâmaniwallah lay in the lap of the river, and so Bahâdur, and Boota, and Jodha, and all the grave big-bearded Dogas who fed their herds of cattle on the low ground and speculated in the cultivation of sand-banks, lived with their loins girded ready to shift house with the shifting of the river. That was why the huts were made of reeds; that was why the women of the village clanked about in solid silver jewellery, thus turning their persons into a secure savings-bank.

Mussumât Jewun, Bahâdur the headman's wife, wore bracelets like manacles, and a perfect yoke of a necklet, as she patted out the dough cakes and expostulated shrilly at the introduction of a new mouth into the family, when Nuttia, fast asleep, was lifted from the pony and put down in the warm sand by the door.

"She belongs to the village," replied the elders wagging their beards. "God knows what my Lords desire with the Harni brat,



but if they ask for her, she must be forthcoming; ay! and fat. They like people to grow fat, even in their jail-*khanas*."

So Nuttia grew fat; she would have grown fat even had the fear of my Lords not been before the simple villagers' eyes, for despite her tender years she was eminently fitted to take care of herself. She had an instinct as to the houses where good things were being prepared, and her chubby little hand, imperiously stretched out for a portion was seldom sent away empty. Indeed, to tell the sober truth, Nuttia was not to be gainsaid as to her own hunger. "My stomach is bigger than *that*, grandmother!" she would say confidently if the alms appeared to her inadequate, and neither cuffs nor neglect altered her conviction. She never cried, and the little fat hand silently demanding more, came back again and again after every rebuff till she felt herself in a condition to seek some warm sunny corner, and curl round to sleep. She lived, for the most part, with the yelping, slouching, village dogs, following them, as the nights grew chill, to the smouldering brick-kilns, where she fed the little dust-coloured puppies with anything above, or beneath, her own appetite.

As she outgrew childhood's vestment of curves and dimples, some one gave her an old rag of a petticoat. Perhaps the acquisition of clothes followed, as in ancient days, a fall from grace; certain it was that Nuttia in a garment was a far less estimable member of society than Nuttia without one. To begin with, it afforded opportunity for the display of many mortal sins. Vainglory in her own appearance, deceit in attempting to palm the solitary prize off on the world as a various and complete wardrobe, and dishonesty flagrant and unabashed; for once provided with a convenient receptacle for acquired trifles Nuttia took to stealing as naturally as a puppy steals bones.

Then, once having recognised the pleasures of possession, she fought furiously against any infringement of her rights. A boy twice her size went yelling home to his parents on her first resort to brute force consequent on the discovery of a potsherd tied to her favourite puppy's tail. This victory proving unfortunate for the peace of the village, the head-men awoke to the necessity for training up their Legacy in the paths of virtue. So persistent pummelling was resorted to with the happiest effect. Nuttia stole and fought no more; she retired with dignity from a society which failed to appreciate her, and took to the wilderness instead. At earliest dawn, after her begging-round was over, she would wander out from the thorn-enclosures to the world; a kaleidoscope world where fields ripened golden crops one year, and the next brought the red brown river wrinkling and dimpling in swift current; where big, brand-new continents rose up before eager eyes, and clothed themselves in green herbs and creeping things innumerable, going no further however in the scale of creation, except when the pelicans hunched themselves together to doze away digestion, or a snub-nosed alligator took a slimy snooze on the extreme edge. If you wished to watch the birds, or the palm-squirrels, or the jerboa rats, you had to face northwards and skirt the high bank. So much of Dame Nature's ways, and a vast deal more, Mussumât Nuttia learnt ere the setting sun and hunger drove her back to the brick-kilns, and the never failing meal of scraps,—never failing, because the Lords of the Universe liked people to be fat, and the head-men were responsible for their Legacy's condition.

So when an Assistant Magistrate,—indefinite because of the constant changes which apparently form part of Western policy,—included the Bhâmaniwallahs in his winter tour of inspection, a *punchaiyut*, or Council of Five, decided that it was the duty of

the village to provide Nuttia with a veil, in case she should be haled to the Presence; and two yards of Manchester muslin were purchased from the reserve funds of the village, and handed over to the child with many wise saws on the general advisability of decency. Nuttia's delight for the first five minutes was exhilarating, and sent the head-men back to other duties with a glow of self-satisfaction on their solemn faces. Then she folded the veil up quite square, sat down on it, and meditated on the various uses to which it could be put.

The result may be told briefly. Two days afterwards the Assistant Magistrate, being a keen sportsman, was crawling on his stomach to a certain long low pool much frequented by teal and mallard. In the rear, gleaming white through the caper bushes, showed the usual cloud of witnesses filled with patient amazement at this unnecessary display of energy; yet for all that counting shrewdly on the good temper likely to result from good sport. So much so, that the sudden uprising into bad language of the *Huzoor* sent them forward prodigal of apology; but the sight that met their eyes dried up the fountain of excuse. Nuttia, stark naked, stood knee-deep in the very centre of the pool, catching small fry with a bag-net ingeniously constructed out of the Manchester veil.

The *punchaiyut* sat again to agree that a child who could not only destroy the sport of the Guardian of the Poor, but could also drag the village honour through the mud, despite munificent inducements toward decency, must be possessed of a devil. So Nuttia was solemnly censured with red pepper and turmeric, until her yells and struggles were deemed sufficient to denote a casting out of the evil spirit. It is not in the slow-brained, calm-hearted peasant of India to be unkind to children, and so, when the function was over, Mussumât Jewun and the other deep-chested, shrill-voiced women comforted the victim with sweetmeats

and the assurance that she would be ever so much better behaved in future.

Nuttia eyed them suspiciously, but ate her sweetmeats. This incident did not increase her confidence in humanity; on the other hand, the attitude of the brute creation was a sore disappointment to her. She might have had a heart instinct with greed of capture and sudden death, instead of that dim desire of companionship, for all the notice taken by the birds, and the squirrels, and the rats, of her outstretched handful of crumbs. She would sit for long hours, silent as a little bronze image set in the sunshiny sand; then in a rage, she would fling the crumbs at the timid creatures, and go home to the dogs and the buffaloes. They at least were not afraid of her; but then they were afraid of nobody, and Nuttia wanted something of her very own.

One day she found it. It was only an old bed-leg, but to the eye of faith an incarnation. For the leg of an Indian bed is not unlike a huge ninepin, and even a Western imagination can detect the embryo likeness between a ninepin and the human form divine. Man has a head, so has a ninepin; and if humanity is to wear petticoats one solid leg is quite as good as two; nay better, since it stands more firmly. Arms were of course wanting, but the holes ready cut in the oval centre for the insertion of the bed-frame formed admirable sockets for two straight pieces of bamboo. At this stage Nuttia's treasure presented the appearance of a sign-post; but the passion of creation was on the child, and a few hours afterwards something comically, yet pitifully, like the Legacy herself stared back at her from that humble studio among the dirt-heaps,—a shag of goat's hair glued on with prickly pear-juice, two lovely black eyes drawn with Mussumât Jewun's *khol* pencil, a few blue beads, a scanty petticoat and veil filched from the child's own garments.

Nuttia, inspired by the recollection of a tinsel-decorated bride in Big Bhâmaniwallah, called her creature Sirdar Begum on the spot. Then she hid her away in a tussock of tiger-grass beyond the thorn enclosures, and strove to go her evening rounds as though nothing had happened. Yet it was as if an angel from heaven had stepped down to take her by the hand. Henceforward she was never to be alone. All through the silent sunny days, as she watched the big black buffaloes grazing on the muddy flats—for Nuttia was advanced to the dignity of a herd-girl by this time—Sirdar Begum was with her as guide, counsellor, and friend. Whether the doll fared best with a heart's whole devotion poured out on her wooden head, or whether Nuttia's part in giving was more blessed, need not be considered; the result to both being a steady grin on a broad round face. But there was another result also; Nuttia began to develope a taste for pure virtue. Perhaps it was the necessity of posing before Sirdar Begum as infallible, joined to the desire of keeping that young person's conduct up to heroic pitch, which caused the sudden rise in principle. At all events the Legacy's cattle became renowned as steady milkers, and the amount of butter she managed to twirl out of the sour curds satisfied even Mussumât Jewun's demands; whereupon the other herds looked at her askance, and muttered an Indian equivalent of seven devils. Then the necessity for amusing the doll led Nuttia into lingering round the little knots of story-tellers who sat far on into the night, discoursing of *jins* and *ghouls*, of faithful lovers, virtuous maidens, and the beauties of holiness. Down on the edge of the big stream, with the water sliding by, Nuttia rehearsed all these wonders to her adored bed-leg until, falling in love with righteousness, she took to telling the truth.

It was a fatal mistake in a cattle-lifting district, and Bhâmaniwallah-

khurd lay in the very centre of that maze of tamarisk jungle, quicksand, and stream, which forms the cattle-thief's best refuge. So Bahâdur, and Jodha, and Boota, together with many another honest man made a steady income by levying black-mail on those who sought safety within their boundaries; and this without in any way endangering their own reputations. All that had to be done was to obliterate strange tracks by sending their own droves in the right direction, and thereafter to keep silence. And every baby in both Bhâmaniwallahs knew that hoof-prints were not a legitimate subject for conversation; all save Nuttia, and she—as luck would have it—was a herd-girl! They tried beating this sixth sense into her, but it was no use, and so whenever the silver-fringed turban, white cotton gloves, and clanking sword of the native Inspector of Police were expected in the village, they used to send the Legacy away to the back of beyond,—right away to the Luckimpura island maybe, to reach which she had to hold on to the biggest buffalo's tail, and so, with Sirdar Begum tied securely to its horns and her own little black head bobbing up and down in its wake, the trio would cross the narrow stream and spread themselves out to dry on the hot sand. Nuttia took a great fancy to the island, and many a time when she might have driven the herds to nearer pastures, preferred the long low stretches of Luckimpura where a flush of green lingered even in the droughts of April.

But even there on one very hot day scarcely a blade was to be found, and Nuttia, careful of her beasts and noting the lowness of the river, gathered them round her with the herdsman's cry and drove them to the further brink intending to take them across to a smaller island beyond. To her surprise they stood knee deep in the water immovable, impassive, noses in air, with long curled horns lying on their necks.

The Legacy shaded her eyes to see more clearly. Nothing was to be seen but the swift shallow stream, the level sand, and gleams of water stretching away to the horizon. Something had frightened them—but what? She gave up the puzzle, and with Sirdar Begum bolt upright before her sat on a snag, dangling her feet over the stream for the sake of the cool air which seemed to rise from the river.

The buffaloes roamed restlessly about, disturbed doubtless by the clouds of flies. The sun beat down ineffectually on the doll's fuzzy head, but it pierced Nuttia's thick pate making her nod drowsily. Her voice recounting the thrilling adventures of brave Bhopalutchi died away into a sigh of sleep. So there was nothing left but the doll's wide unwinking eyes to keep watch over the world.

What was that? Something cold, icy-cold! Nuttia woke with a start. One brown heel had touched the water; she looked down at it, then swiftly around her. The buffaloes huddled by the ford had ceased to graze, and a quiver of light greeted her glance at the purple horizon. She sprang to her feet and breaking off a root from the snag, held it to the dimpling water. The next instant a scared face looked at the horizon once more. The river was rising fast, rising as she had never seen it rise before. Yet in past years she had witnessed many a flood; floods that had swept away much of the arable land and driven the villagers to till new soil thrown up nearer the high bank. Ay! and driven many of them to seek new homes beside the new fields, until Bhâmaniwallah-khurd had dwindled away to a few houses, a very few, and these on that hot April day deserted for the most part, since all the able-bodied men and women were away at the harvest. Even the herds had driven their cattle northwards, hoping to come in for some of the lively bustle of the fields. There were only Nuttia on the Luckimpura

island and Mussumât Jewun, with her new baby and the old hag who nursed her, in the reed huts. All this came to the girl's memory as the long low cry of the herd rose on the hot air, and with Sirdar Begum close clasped in her veil she drove the big buffalo Moti into the stream. How cold the water was; cold as the snows from which it came! The Legacy had not lived in the lap of the river for so long without learning somewhat of its ways. She knew of the frost-bound sources whence it flowed, and of the disastrous floods which follow beneath a cloudless sky, on unusual heat or unusual rain in those mountain fastnesses. The coming storm, whose arch of cloud, shimmering with sheet-lightning, had crept beyond the line of purple haze, was nothing; that was not the nightmare of the river-folk.

She stood for a moment when dry land was reached, hesitating whether to strike straight for the high bank or make for the village lying a mile distant. Some vague instinct of showing Sirdar Begum she was not afraid, made her choose the latter course, though most of the herd refused to follow her decision and broke away. She collected her few remaining favourites, and with cheerful cries plunged into the tamarisk jungle. Here, shut out from sight, save of the yielding bushes, her thoughts went far afield. What if the old *nullah* between the reed huts and the rising ground were to fill? What if the low levels between that rising ground and the high bank were to flood? And every one beyond in the yellow corn, except Mai Jewun and people who did not count, —babies, and old women, and the crippled girl in the far hut! Only herself and Sirdar Begum to be brave, for Mai Jewun was sick.

"Wake up! Wake up! Mai Jewun! the floods are out!" broke in on the new-born baby's wail as Nuttia's broad scared face shut out the sunlight from the door.

"Go away, unlucky daughter of a bad mother," grumbled Jewun drow-

sily. "Dost wish to cast thy evil eye on my heart's delight? Go, I say."

"Yea! go!" grumbled the old nurse cracking her fingers. "Sure some devil possesseth thee to tell truth or lies at thy own pleasure."

But the crippled girl spinning in the far hut had heard the flying feet, caught the excited cry, and now, crawling on her knees to the door threw up her hands and shrieked aloud. "The water stood ankle-deep among the tamarisk roots, and from its still pool tiny tongues licked their way along the dry sand."

"The flood! the flood!" The un-availing cry rang out as the women huddled together helplessly.

"Mai Jewun! there is time," came the Legacy's eager voice. "Put the baby down, and help. I saw them do it at Luckimpura that time they took the cattle over the deep stream, and Bahâdur beat me for seeing it. Quick! quick!"

Simple enough, yet in its very simplicity lay their only chance of escape. A string-woven bed buoyed up with the bundles of reeds cut ready for re-thatching, and on this frail raft four people—nay five! for first of all with jealous care Nuttia placed her beloved Sirdar Begum in safety, wrapping her up in the clothes she discarded in favour of free nakedness.

Quick! Quick! if the rising ground is to be gained and the levels beyond forded ere the water is too deep! Moti and a companion yoked by plough-ropes to the bed, wade knee-deep, hock-deep, into the stream, and now with the old, cheerful cry Nuttia, clinging to their tails and so guiding them, urges the beasts deeper still. The stream swirls past holding them with it, though they breast it bravely. A log, long stranded in some shallow, dances past, shaving the raft by an inch. Then an alligator, swept from its moorings and casting eyes on Nuttia's brown legs, makes the beasts plunge madly. A rope breaks,—the churned water sweeps over the women,—the

end is near,—when another frantic struggle leaves Moti alone to her task. The high childish voice calling on her favourite's courage rises again and again; but the others, cowed into silence, clutch together with hid faces, till a fresh plunge loosens their tongues once more. It is Moti finding foothold, and they are safe—so far.

"Quick! Mai Jewun," cries Nuttia, as her companions stand looking fearfully over the waste of shallows before them. She knows from the narrowness of the ridge they have reached that time is precious. "We must wade while we can, saving Moti for the streams. Take up the baby, and I——"

Her hands, busy on the bed, stilled themselves,—her face grew gray,—she turned on them like a fury. "Sirdar Begum! I put her there—where is Sirdar Begum?"

"That bed-leg!" shrilled the mother, tucking up her petticoats for greater freedom. "There was no room, and Heart's Delight was cold. Bah! wood floats."

"*Hull-lal-lal-a lalla la!*" The herdsman's cry was the only answer. Moti has faced the flood again, but this time with a light load, for the baby nestling amid Nuttia's clothes is the only occupant of the frail raft.

"My son! My son! Light of mine eyes! Core of my heart! Come back! Come back!"

But the little black head drifting down stream behind the big one never turned from its set purpose. Wood floated, and so might babies. Why not?

Why not, indeed! But as a matter of fact Mai Jewun was right. A dilapidated bed-leg was picked up on a sandbank miles away when the floods subsided; and Moti joined the herd next day to chew the cud of her reflections contentedly. But the Village Legacy and Heart's Delight remained somewhere seeking for something. That something doubtless which had turned the bed-leg into Sirdar Begum.



## ROMANCE AND YOUTH.

A YEAR or two ago M. Ferdinand Brunetière, the austere literary critic of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, delivered a lecture at the Odéon Theatre upon Molière's *L'Ecole des Femmes*. According to him, so M. Lemaître reported, the comedy turned upon the question of age. Agnes is sixteen; Arnolphe confesses to forty-two. That in itself is enough in the play to make Arnolphe not only ridiculous but odious from beginning to end. His successful rival Horace is twenty. He has nothing but youth to recommend him; nor is anything more needed. He and Agnes have all the sympathy of author and audience. And quite right too! cries this austere M. Brunetière; it is a natural and sacred law. In sympathising with Agnes and Horace, the heart is sympathising with nature and instinct.

Molière perhaps does not make the play turn quite so nakedly on the contrast of age as the moral requires. There may not be much in Horace's favour besides his youth; but there is a good deal more than his forty-two years to be set to the discredit of Arnolphe. He is a system-monger and an egotist. Now the egotist, according to Mr. Meredith, is the chosen sport of the comic spirit; while woman (bless her!) was created to be the bane of system and the despair of the system-monger. When a mature bachelor like Arnolphe, in self-conscious dread of becoming as one of the horned herd of husbands about him, captures a babe in long clothes and has her mewed up and artificially trained to be a helpmeet for his special lordship, then the imps of mischief gather in a circle on their haunches to wait and watch for the catastrophe. And if the wretched man, after dwarfing the girl's nature and bounding her horizon,

demand<sup>3</sup> love on the score of gratitude, the angels of heaven join in the applause over his discomfiture. Arnolphe's whole conduct was unfair and ignoble, and the heart of the natural man rejoices to see his prey escape him.

Still, whether or not the comedy was exclusively framed to point this moral, the moral is unquestionably there. Arnolphe's forty-two years count heavily against him. Literature in the mouths of the dramatist and the critic is definitely enough on the side of youth against middle age. Nor could spokesmen be selected for literature less open to suspicion of sentimental bias. As a critic M. Brunetière has been reproached with being too much of a schoolmaster and too little of a lover. And as for Molière, he is the incarnation of that spirit of comedy which is the arch foe of sentimentalism.

So much for the doctrine of literature; now for the teaching of life. Shift the scene from the French stage to the Bow Street Police-Court. A defendant, aged twenty-one, described as a pianoforte-tuner, is charged with being drunk and disorderly and with assaulting the police. The police, it appeared, had interfered to protect a woman, whom prisoner was threatening. *Magistrate*. "Who was the woman?" *Prisoner*. "My wife, your worship." *Magistrate*. "Your wife! why you have the appearance of a boy. Is your wife here?" She was. A little woman stepped forward and said she was prisoner's wife. She was nineteen. They had been married twelve months. Then the scandalised magistrate delivered his soul. "There is no place," he exclaimed, "where so much misery is seen as at the police-court. There is no place to see so

plainly how human misery is produced by human folly,—not by bad laws but by human folly. A boy and girl, just beyond the age when they ought to be whipped, go and get married!”

The age when they ought to be whipped! Shades of Romeo and Juliet! You see, instead of applauding a natural and sacred law M. Brunetière ought to have laid Horace and Agnes across his knee, and imagined for a moment he held under his admonitory palm the prostrate form of M. Zola. It is painful to think what would have been the worthy magistrate's feelings could the precocious babes of Verona have been dragged before his judgment-seat. Indeed if Romeo and Juliet could be translated with their ages unchanged from the poetry of Shakespeare into the prose of modern London life, the stringency of our legislation would make it awkward for the lover of a lady of such tender years. Happily those immortal types of youth and romance, of passionate and tragic love, were not within the jurisdiction. They were Italian, Italians of the Renaissance; and Italians have a large license in these matters. It is the naughty sun, as Byron explains, and the naughtier moon. Sun and race make a deal of difference. Readers of this magazine will remember the Indian girl in Mr. Kipling's beautiful story, *Without Benefit of Clergy*, and her rebellious jealousy of the protracted youth of the “white mem-log,” her rivals.

Perhaps the sun of Italy is indirectly answerable for the tender age of the lovers and their lasses in much of English poetry and romance. Our poets and romancers were so long under the influence of Italy and the Renaissance. From the time that Chaucer transferred his allegiance from French to Italian models, down till the prestige of the *grand siècle* and Charles II.'s connection with the court of Louis XIV. reimposed a French model, Italy set our literary fashion. The un-English horrors of the tragedy

of Webster and the like are but a reflection of the Italy of the Sforzas and Borgias. Boccaccio and Bandello were our models for story-telling. With the form of the sonnet we imported from Italy the spirit and features of Italian sonnetting. Italian Juliets were imported into English poetry and romance without being made to pay the duty of added years to a northern climate. What in Italy had been nature became in England a piece of literary convention. The Elizabethan sonneteer, if he was not chanting the mature divinity of the Virgin Queen, would proclaim his devotion to some lady-love of traditional immaturity. At Juliet's age, the English miss is apt, as Byron brutally said, to smell of bread and butter. No sober Briton nowadays toasts the maiden of blushing fifteen,—at least not within ear-shot of the police. Charles Surface and his friends were not a particularly sober crew; but in these days Joseph Surface would belong to a Vigilance Society and there might be the devil to pay. It is absolutely incomprehensible how Robert Browning, of all men in the world, should have come to make Mildred Tresham only fourteen years of age when she brought the blot on the 'scutcheon. Dr. Furnivall really should have seen to this. Evelyn Hope was sixteen years old when she died, and the man of forty-eight who loved her, confessed that it was not “her time to love,” and that only somewhere in the seventh heaven could he look for any return.

It is true that to redress the balance romance has some mature heroines to set in the opposite scale. To begin with, there is Helen of Troy herself, the arch-heroine of romance. Her love affairs began early enough no doubt, early enough to satisfy Mr. Browning. She was a mere child when Theseus ran away with her. But by a shameless statistical enquiry, by reckoning up the episodes of her youth, and by comparing the date of the Argonautic expedition, in which her brothers took part, with the date

of the Trojan war, the unconscionable Bayle proved to his own ungentlemanly satisfaction that Helen was fifty, more or less, when Paris carried her off in triumph to Troy. Well, then the war lasted ten years; and at the end of it, not only was Menelaus legitimately proud to get her back again, but her beauty was so potent still that Priam forgot and forgave in his pride of it all the woes it had brought on him and his, and paid his tribute of kingly courtesy to her unabdicatèd grace of womanhood. Nay, ten years later again, when Telemachus visited the Spartan court in quest of news of his many-wiled and much-wanted father, Helen was a fine woman still, though at that time, by Bayle's iniquitous calculations, no less than seventy years of age. No doubt her race and lineage must be borne in mind. There is an elderly aristocratic couple in one of Disraeli's novels, or in one of the parodies of his novels—it is difficult sometimes to remember with Disraeli which is text and which is parody—who might have been taken, so pure was their blood and so perfect their breeding, for their eldest son and daughter's eldest son and daughter. Helen's lineage was more than aristocratic; it was divine. Daughter of Zeus and Leda, sister of Castor and Pollux, she had in her veins the eternal ichor of the gods. That of course made a difference. Indeed Bayle takes credit for the moderation of his estimate, and hints that some would make her out to be at least a hundred. But why do I linger over the ungallant gossip of this dictionary-making sceptic? Was it worthy of a Frenchman to canvass the age of the liege-lady of all lovers of romance? Was it worthy of the caution of a scientific sceptic to clutch at the conjectural chronology of mythological fancy?

If you listen to some of the gossips by the way, you would believe that Iphigenia was not Agamemnon's daughter, but the daughter of Helen and Theseus. That would make Helen

under thirty (would it not?) when she eloped with Paris. It adds fresh cruelty to the curse that blasted Iphigenia's youth, to think that it was her own mother that was the cause. But she would not be the last daughter who has been sacrificed to a mother's flirtation.

If Helen had a grown-up daughter when her face was the fate of nations, Penelope had a grown-up son when the stress of rivalry for her hand was at its keenest. The suitors very likely had set their hearts at least as much upon the estate as on the person of this paragon of prehistoric grass-widowhood. That is what cynicism would suggest, and there was not a little in the conduct of the suitors to give colour to the suggestion. Yet Homer hardly gives us to understand that Penelope was past the prime of her beauty. Nor did scandal spare even her name. The good Homer gave no countenance to it, or it would have put a very distressing complexion on the pretty story of the woven and unwoven web. One version of the birth of Pan, remember, was that he was born of Penelope in her lord's absence, and that no single suitor could claim the whole credit of the paternity.

Pass from romance of legend to romance of history. The wedded names of Antony and Cleopatra remain hardly less than Tristram and Iseult the very symbol of love's lordship. Now Cleopatra was twenty-one when first she met "broad-fronted Cæsar," and was twenty-five before the thoughtful knife of Brutus cut the *liaison* short. Yet these were the green and salad days whereof Shakespeare makes her speak so scornfully. When she captivated Mark Antony she was twenty-eight, and she held him her slave for eleven whole years; so that when "by the asp's bite" she "died a queen," absolute queen of him still soul and sense, she was of the unromantic age of thirty-nine. I named Iseult. A learned friend of mine has unearthed her epitaph from

an old Italian book, whereby it appears she was thirty-one at the time when she fell stricken to death on Tristram's corpse.

So, you see, it was no such revolutionary innovation, no such Copernican discovery for romance, when Balzac made his much vaunted "woman of thirty" the centre of the system of his human comedy. The usually unsympathetic Ste. Beuve might trumpet the achievement, and talk of these women of thirty waiting dumb and expectant for their discoverer, and of the electric flash when they met. But really she is an old friend in romance, this woman of thirty! Nor did Charles de Bernard do any new thing when he bettered his master and gave the world his "woman of forty." Nor did Thackeray, when, by one of the boldest strokes in fiction, he made Harry Esmond turn from Beatrix to her mother Lady Castlewood. Diane de Poitiers was forty-eight when Henry II. of France was twenty-nine. The young King surrendered at discretion to his enchantress, and gave her his country, himself, ay and his queen too, to do what she would with. She held her sway without check or wane to the end. She was seventy when Brantôme saw her, and she was, he says, as fair and fresh and lovable as at thirty. Posterity, said Paul de St. Victor prettily, still looks at Diane through the dazzled eyes of Henry; and we picture her always, in spite of her really venerable age, as the artists of the Renaissance immortalised her, in the form of Jean Goujon's goddesses or Cellini's nymph.

Then there is the famous case of Ninon de l'Enclos. If Ninon was only thirty when she carried off captive Madame de Sévigné's husband, she was full fifty-five when a generation later she took captive the same Madame de Sévigné's son. And so far as the willingness of the spirit went, she would no doubt have carried her conquests into the third generation, but that the Marquis de Grignan, Madame de Sévigné's grandson, was barely

fifteen when she was seventy—the three-score years and ten assigned by the preacher as the limits of life, not of love. Like Emma Bovary, Ninon kept her last kiss for the cross; she devoted to religion the last two or three of the eighty-nine years allotted to her as the span of her earthly pilgrimage.

I have been led far afield by my dream of fair women,—even the census-taker has his dreams, though it is his invidious duty to ask the ladies' ages. I was thinking rather of the heroes than of the heroines of romance when I started with the contrast between the views of the police-magistrate and the literary critic. As to the age of romance for girls there is no great discrepancy between the ideas expressed in literature and those entertained in life. Our Psyches are still girls, if our Cupids begin to wax fat and forty. Neither the tragic childhood of Mildred Tresham, nor the triumphant old age of Ninon de l'Enclos is normal in life or books. Nor, in spite of Ste. Beuve and the enthusiasm of later and lesser critics, is Balzac's woman of thirty a normal subject of romance. She was bred partly of Balzac's idiosyncrasy, partly of his pride of originality, partly of artificial social conditions. The baby's grandmother in Mrs. Walford's amusing novel was not regarded by her neighbours as a normal case, least of all by the baby's very conventional parents. It is significant, as M. Lemaître has observed, that Molière's Agnes is still made up on the modern stage to look sixteen or thereabouts; whereas the actor who plays Arnolphe to produce the proper effect is bound to add, and in fact always does add, a very considerable number of years to the forty-two Molière gave him. To a modern audience a prospective husband of forty-two would appear at least as natural as a prospective husband of twenty. And if in life the man of forty-two is not such a terror to the girls as he was in the old comedy, so neither is the youth of

twenty such a hero. What strikes one in the old-fashioned stories is the extraordinary capacities of the hero of twenty. There is hardly anything he cannot do. In peace and war, in policy and passion, he is equal to all emergencies. In reality the youth of twenty is not of much account. The girls snub him ; his college gates him ; nobody but his tailor trusts him much. The pianoforte-tuner was twenty-one, and a gentleman with judicial experiences of life and humanity regards him as a boy just beyond the age when he ought to be whipped. The young Duke of Orleans was of the full heroic age of twenty-one when he sought to take his place in the ranks and was put in prison for his pains ; and whether for sympathy or sarcasm the world was agreed in treating his exploit as the prank of a school-boy. At the Bar men are still rising juniors with grey hair or bald head. In politics Mr. Chamberlain is a young man, Mr. Balfour is almost a boy, Mr. Curzon is positively an infant, though no doubt a precocious infant. Used men to ripen earlier, or was the world's work simpler ? Or has romance been at her tricks, and have we here another of those grievous discrepancies between fact and old-fashioned fiction, which make Mr. Howells to go so heavily ?

Old Montaigne did actually fix the age of full maturity at twenty. Like Lord Beaconsfield, he was a believer in youth. Even at his epoch he thought men ought to set about the world's work earlier than they did. "For my part" (I quote the quaint phrases of John Florio's translation which Shakespeare used) "I think that our minds are as full grown and perfectly jointed at twenty years as they shall be, and promise as much as they can. A mind which at that age hath not given some evident token or earnest of her sufficiency, shall hardly give it afterward, put her to what trial you list. Natural qualities and virtues, if they have any vigorous or beauteous thing in them, will produce and show the same within

that time or never." Yet even with him twenty is the age rather of promise than performance, and when the talk is of actions he raises his limit to thirty. "Of all humane, honourable, and glorious actions that ever came into my knowledge, I am persuaded I should have a harder task to number those which both in ancient times and in our own have been produced and achieved before the age of thirty years than such as were performed after. Yea, often in the life of the same men." Yet the only cases he cites are Hannibal, and his "great adversary," Scipio. "Both lived," says Montaigne, "the better part of their life with the glory which they had gotten in their youth ; and though afterward they were great men in respect of all others, yet were they but mean in regard of themselves." *Ultima primis cedebant* was Livy's sentence on Scipio. Hannibal was twenty-nine when he invaded Italy. Scipio was thirty-two at Zama, but that was only the crowning victory of his second or third campaign ; he had saved his father's life in a battle at the age of sixteen, and at eighteen he fought on the fatal field of Cannæ.

Bacon, who was inclined to agree with Montaigne as to the advantage of youth, does not add many instances. He quotes Cosimo who was appointed Duke of Florence in 1573 at the age of seventeen and proved an able ruler ; also a certain Gaston de Foix. According to Bacon's last editor, this was probably a Viscount de Béarn, born in 1331, who served with distinction at the age of fourteen in military and then in civil business, and was described in his later years by Froissart as a pattern of chivalry. Cosimo governed a wily and turbulent population at seventeen, and Augustus Cæsar by his brain and by his arm was master of the world at nineteen. Montaigne thought it an anomaly that the same Augustus, "That had been universal and supreme judge of the world when he was but nineteen years old, would by his laws have another to be thirty before he should be made a



competent judge of a cottage or farm." But Augustus Cæsar was an exceptionally wise youth. And yet,—perhaps because, as Lady Blandish hinted, Love does not love exceptionally wise youths,—Cleopatra, who was an expert in love, would have none of him as a lover. Our own Pitt, who, as we are so often reminded, was a minister at twenty-three, as a lover cut no figure at all.

How came Montaigne and Bacon to leave out Alexander? Early in his twenties he had added the conquest of Asia to the conquest of Greece. Before he died at thirty-two he had married three wives, and sighed for more worlds to conquer; and besides his unparalleled achievement, he was as beautiful as a god, if the sculptors are to be trusted. He might perhaps have put his youth to better purpose than to running after Thais and setting fire to Persepolis, but his marriage with the fair Roxana, the captive of his bow and spear, was after the most orthodox romantic pattern. Then there was the great Condé. Michelet says he was ill-favoured; I have a portrait which makes him fine-looking. But any way was not the conqueror of Rocroi at twenty-two a hero to fire a girl's imagination? And any woman, in romance or out of it, might have been proud to have had for lover the famous Duc de La Rochefoucauld, with his youth, his handsome face, his clever tongue, and his reckless bravery. Indeed, as a matter of history, a gracious line of remarkable women were proud to have him for their lover.

But these men were exceptions. They only prove the rule. And if I ransacked history for more instances they would be exceptions still. The normal youth of twenty is not at all the omnipotent person that the fancy of romance has painted him. Accordingly, when the novelists took to copying life instead of correcting it, they came round to the magistrate's way of thinking, and the age of the hero went up. I imagine that the hero of

twenty is an exception in the ordinary modern novel of ordinary life. Poor Pendennis at twenty was very little of a hero. He may fall in love with a Fotheringay, but a Fotheringay will hardly be so weak as to fall in love with him. If a Laura love him, she will wait and watch for him to grow into a man. Miss Ethel Newcome will flirt with Clive with a light heart, but could she be expected to think of the boy seriously? Jane Austen's Emma, who thoroughly knew her way about in match-making, surrendered her heart to the safe keeping of thirty-eight—such was the sober age of the admirable Knightly. Jane Eyre's Rochester was certainly no chicken. If you were to apply the brutal methods of Bayle to Ouida's Tricotrín, I believe (though I have never worked it out myself, being a poor hand at figures) that it would turn out that Tricotrín had attained the respectable age of seventy or eighty, when he cheats us of our tears by his apparently premature death at the barricades. Miss Broughton's magnificent ugly men are eminently mature. They are scarred and seamed with experiences like Milton's Satan. And (to the no small surprise of some of the clever novelist's sincerest admirers) Miss Broughton has been ranked high among English realists by no less a critic than M. Brunetière, and held up as a pattern to certain of his own countrymen who make a great cry of their realism—and no little wool.

Ah, Molière might say, this may be life, but it is not nature. M. Brunetière reiterates his point. He argues in his new volume of *Critical Essays on the History of French Literature* that Molière's moral was always for a return to nature from unnatural convention; from conventional and unnatural marriage, social fashions, morality, religion. Well, what precisely is meant by nature? There is an obvious truth and a number of unobvious fallacies in the ordinary distinction between nature and civilisation. A philosopher, whom M.

Brunetière knows a great deal better than I do, taught long ago once for all that it is man's nature to be civilised; and the sentiments and usages of civilisation—as I think M. Lemaître has urged in answer to M. Brunetière—mould and control even the instinctive impulses of love and passion. Where in history would Molière find his golden age or state of nature wherein the girls of sixteen fall in love only with the boys of twenty? Nausicaa's girl's heart was given almost at first sight to the middle-aged and much enduring hero, who had a wife and grown-up son and several other things awaiting him at home. It is one of the oldest and prettiest love stories in the world. And if you think that Ulysses got some unfair advantage from the grace that Athena shed about his head and shoulders, when the maidens looked the other way and he made his toilet on the sea-shore, what do you say to the case of Desdemona and her Moor? And if Shakespeare's word is not evidence, what do you say of Vanessa and Swift? A girl's instinct, according to Mr. Meredith, who is notoriously (so say his disciples) in the secrets of the sex, is for strength. This is, no doubt, a survival from the old-fashioned days when women used to look to men as their protectors and defenders. Well, strength is displayed in different ways in different ages and societies. So far as feats of chivalry went and Homeric derring-do, there was no particular reason perhaps why a youth should not be a hero so soon as his muscle was set. It has often struck me, in reading the *Iliad*, that the Trojan War was far liker to a series of football matches than to modern warfare. On the half-holidays, so to speak, when the weather was fine, the Greeks and Trojans would turn out for a match on the ringing plains, while the old boys looked on from the walls and the ships. Our play-grounds and hunting-fields could show almost as good a record of damages to life and limb as was suffered by the heroes in many

an Homeric combat or medieval tourney. But if the girl's instinct is for a man strong in her particular sphere—political, intellectual, or social; if her hero is to be a man among men in complex stages of society, she must put up with a lover of a certain age.

So much the worse for civilisation, Molière might insist. It is nature that speaks in the poetry and romance of the love of boy and girl. It is nature that speaks in the spectator's instinctive sympathy with the young lovers in the comedies. It is a natural and sacred law that youth should love youth. When civilisation puts youth and youth asunder, man is dividing what nature would join. And if history can produce no such golden age or state of nature an appeal might be made to the customs of the proletariat. The very name *proletariat* is warrant enough. Undistracted by conventional ambitions and undeterred by conventional scruples the proletariat increases and multiplies at an age which makes magistrates and Malthusians, economists and the guardians of the poor, tear their hair in dismay and indignation. And George Sand might be called to support the appeal. George Sand, of all women, could for opposite reasons have had no prejudices in favour of immaturity in marriage or love. Yet when she turned to study the country people about her at No-hant and to portray it in those charming village tales she wrote towards the close of her full-blooded career, the popular sentiment therein is definitely, not to say despotically, on M. Brunetière's side. "Germain," says Maurice to his son-in-law, in *La Mare au Diable*, "you must make up your mind to take another wife. It is two years since my daughter died, and your eldest boy is seven. You are going on for thirty, and after that a man is too old to marry." And then he proceeds to recommend Germain not to think of a young girl, but to look out for a seasoned widow of his own years. Germain in fact was

only twenty-eight; but he regarded himself, and was generally regarded by his neighbours, as too old to be the husband of a young girl. So when he fell in love with Marie, who was sixteen, he did not dare to tell her of his feelings; and when he married her, it was something of a scandal in the country-side.

Then Dickens, again. How Dickens loved to watch the boys and girls falling in love and marrying! Think of Tommy Traddles, defiant of conventionality, triumphantly playing Puss in the Corner with his five sisters-in-law in his business chambers at Gray's Inn; or of Scrooge's nephew and Scrooge's niece by marriage and Scrooge's niece's sisters at the ghostly Christmas party, and the shameless way Topper followed up the plump sister with the lace tucker at the game of Blind Man's Buff. "Why did you get married?" Scrooge had asked his nephew on the Christmas Eve in return for his Christmas greetings. "Because I fell in love." "Because you fell in love!" growled Scrooge, as if that were the only thing in the world more ridiculous than a merry Christmas. Ebenezer Scrooge, you may remember, boasted that he helped to support the institutions of civilisation, the prison and the workhouse; and if the boys and girls must marry, and then when want came would rather die than take advantage of these institutions,—well, they had better die, he said, and decrease the surplus population. Or take *Bleak House*; the Court of Chancery and the great case of Jarndyce against Jarndyce,—there you have, no doubt, a triumph of civilisation; but Richard Carton and Ada, with their young love, had nature on their side. Richard confessed upon his deathbed that he had wedded his girl-wife to want, and that he had the world still to begin. Yet they had their reward.

Let us consult one more authority. Sir Anthony Absworthy Bearne Feverel, Baronet, of Raynham Abbey, had, like our worthy magistrate, medi-

tated deeply upon life and marriage. He brought up his son Richard on a system, and meant to marry him by system at the age of twenty-five. Unfortunately when this scientific humanist was away consulting family physicians and lawyers about a helpmeet for his peerless son, the magnetic youth sculling down the river had his vision of the magnetic maiden; and nature speaking in his bosom less sentimentally than the baronet he straightway took his part in one of the prettiest love-scenes in literature. Richard was only eighteen, Lucy was a year younger; about the age when they ought to have been whipped. So precisely thought Adrian Harley, the wise youth. But when the wise youth and the scientific humanist fought romance with civilisation, misery came of it. Mr. Meredith is no sentimentalist, he is indeed our scourge for sentimentalists; yet his heart is surely all with Richard and Lucy. Which is right! Richard Feverel or the Wise Youth? Molière or the Magistrate? Romance or Civilisation?

Well, suppose for a crooked answer to a cross question we betake ourselves to the lavish oracle of Bulwer Lytton. Bulwer wrote *Pelham* when he was twenty-two; and he represented Pelham as dominating a brilliant and cynical society when he had but barely left college. He wrote *Devereux* the year after; and Devereux concludes the history of his life at thirty-four with the confession that love was for him a thing of the past. It was twelve years later before *Ernest Maltravers* and its sequel *Alice* were finished; and the reader might gather from those romances that though eighteen may be the age of folly and passion, the age for true heroism is thirty-six. Later, Lytton took refuge in the old romantic device of an elixir of perpetual youth.—At whatever age one finds one's self, to be persuaded that *that* is the age of romance, is not this the true elixir of perpetual youth?

## THE FLIGHT FROM THE FIELDS.

WE are taught that one of the two serious blots on King David's scutcheon is due to his having insisted on numbering the people. Viewed by the light of modern experience the offence seems so venial that the expiatory sacrifice which it entailed, of seventy thousand lives, is at first sight wholly repugnant to our sense of just proportion. Fortunately, however, it is not for us to determine in this case the balance between the crime and its penalty; enough that in our own century we have been suffered to follow with apparent impunity the example set by the Israelitish monarch with such disastrous results to his nation. Perhaps, as some commentators suggest, it was a mere bit of braggadocio on his part, or was undertaken with an eye to increased taxation. Whatever his motive, we may be certain that he was influenced by no considerations equal in purity and benevolence to those which prompt the decennial enumerations of the present age. It is not indeed very easy to set down in strictly definite terms the precise value of our own periodical census. We cannot alter the total at which we so laboriously arrive, or by a stroke of the pen diminish the evils and hardships incident to a steady growth of population. Malthus himself with all his doctrines cannot avail to check the glut of humanity. But at least we are free from the imputation of a sinister aim. If by our numbering we effect no practical good, at any rate we do no appreciable harm; nay, we may even cheer the dreary life of the statistician by providing him from time to time with new tables for consultation and comparison, while to the commonplace philosopher we open a perfect mine of innocent speculation. How are all

these gaping mouths to be filled? How will it fare a few years hence with professions in which even now there is barely standing-room? Where are we all to live, where to be buried? The fittest, no doubt, will continue to survive, and the world's motto will remain, as heretofore, "The Devil take the hindmost"; but, fit or unfit, we must all in our bodily shape be somehow disposed of, and cremation will not become popular for many a long day. There is no end to the problems of this kind that a reflective mind can set itself, and the solutions may be whatever we please. These things lie on the knees of the gods.

But it is the primary business of a census to reveal facts rather than to promote theories. And one interesting fact which at the close of each decade asserts itself with growing emphasis is this: that the country is becoming gradually deserted in favour of the town. This Flight from the Fields, as we may call it, is no new phenomenon. The earliest symptoms of it appeared with the abolition of serfdom, and led in the year 1351 to that rigorous enactment known to history as the Statute of Labourers, by the terms of which the peasant was forbidden to quit the parish where he lived in search of better-paid employment; if he disobeyed he became a "fugitive," and subject to imprisonment at the hands of the justices of the peace. As manufactures, and commercial enterprise generally, began to extend in all directions, the inhabitants of the towns naturally multiplied apace, until in the latter half of the eighteenth century a cry arose that there were not hands enough left in the country districts to till the soil and gather in the fruits of the earth.

It was, however, difficult to prove the actual depopulation. No official record had hitherto been kept of the number of heads in each parish, and the evidence of the registers was not trustworthy, for registration was not yet ordained by law, and consisted for the most part of the entries made by parson or clerk. Thus none but those were included who, or whose parents, belonged to the State Church. It was only here and there that a Gilbert White existed, curious and painstaking enough to go from house to house and deliberately count the inmates. At this juncture appeared Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*, a lament which, in addition to its acknowledged poetical value, contains sundry home-truths singularly applicable to the condition of things in our own day, a hundred and twenty years later. "Sweet Auburn," indeed, finds many a counterpart in the modern villages of agricultural counties. The causes which led to the exodus in Goldsmith's time were, some of them, identical with those which prevail now. It is worth while to consider what these causes were and are, and also what new allurements the march of time has discovered, so irresistible in rustic eyes.

They may be divided broadly into two classes, those of necessity and those of choice. For we must not forget that, if the peasants and their offspring have been leaving the country, the country also has been steadily leaving them. When Virgil told the farmers that they were the happiest of mortals if they could but become conscious of their good fortune, he did not contemplate an era of steam-ploughs and threshing-machines, or bear in mind the unconscionable waywardness of a British climate. Nor did he anticipate the difficulty of maintaining a family on a precarious wage—in severe weather apt to vanish altogether—of twelve to fourteen shillings a week. So, too, when Cicero in his dogmatic fashion declares that of all professions none is better, more profitable, or more

worthy of a free man, than the pursuit of agriculture, we must not apply the dictum literally to those who, as master and man, follow the calling in, let us say, Norfolk or Herefordshire. Probably, if we were able to consult a full and unimpeachable record of the past, we should find that at no period and in no country has rural life combined Arcadian simplicity with real comfort and contentment.

Those of us who are descending into the vale of years can conjure up sundry sights and sounds now no longer to be encountered in the course of a country walk. Not many, for example, of the present generation can have seen, and fewer heard, a flail. That venerable implement, already well on its way towards extinction, will soon be found only among the curiosities of a museum. And yet, not long ago, how proud a part it played in the farmer's economy! Who that has ever listened to it can forget the rhythmical cadence of four flails plied by skilful hands? The echo of it will never quite die out of his ears. The time was kept so rigidly, each melodious thud fell with such unerring precision, that the result was a musical quartette which never jarred upon the most sensitive tympanum, for it meant bread. To this tune it was that for centuries our golden grain was shed upon the barn-floor. The term itself may be traced back in our literature to the very earliest examples of a settled English language. Langland uses it in *Piers Plowman*, and it may be, for all we know, a relic of the Roman occupation, for it is undoubtedly, so at least say the shrewdest etymologists, a corruption of the Latin *flagellum*—possibly, but not certainly, through the Old French *flael*. But its glory is departed with the horny hands which once wielded it so deftly. The art of threshing by hand has given place to the noisier, unmusical, but far more expeditious method whose presence is betrayed by the column of black smoke and the snorting engine of civilization. The work which erewhile kept four men busy through the



winter months is now accomplished in a couple of days. The scythe and sickle, again, once indispensable and universal, have lost their importance, and are reserved only for emergencies. Where storms have ruthlessly laid the crops, their virtue is still, if grudgingly, acknowledged, and on the steep hill-side the new-fangled mower is helpless. But we no longer identify them with the harvest. They are as scarce as the gleaners, whose poor perquisite is now, thanks to a diligent use of the rake, reduced to a sorry minimum. Thereaper, indeed, has fared somewhat better. Him and his sickle we meet in all tongues and in all ages, nor can they be said to have altered in any essential respect since their first appearance in the harvest-field. If we turn to a Dictionary of Antiquities, we find them represented on some of the most ancient coins known to numismatists, or confronting us in hieroglyphics and the earliest existing specimens of pictures in stone. It is the reaper who symbolizes in the poets two of the profoundest mysteries which environ mankind, Time and Death. The plough, since Triptolemus first invented it, has undergone many changes and improvements, though a type closely corresponding to the original is still jealously maintained in some few ultra-conservative lands, as, for instance, in some parts of Northern Italy and India. But the sickle of to-day, let us rather say of yesterday, is at least as old as Homer and Hesiod, and has never appreciably diverged from the primitive model.

The flail and the sickle, each of which once kept many a pair of hands employed, having thus retired in favour of more complicated but infinitely less dilatory machines, one reason why rural districts are more thinly populated now than formerly stands immediately disclosed. The same work now occupies less time and fewer hands. The mower is an ungainly object, especially when it embraces also the function of a sheaf-binder; but it requires the attention of only two men

to effect in a single day what would once have occupied a dozen men for a week. It is only when the carting begins, and the weather is threatening, that the lack of strong arms is apt to make itself felt. This was the case in some parts of the country during the last harvest, which in many cases was easily cut, but with the greatest difficulty carried. Even with all the mechanical appliances now at his command the farmer could not contrive to do everything in the one week of fine weather vouchsafed to him. High wages, with contingent advantages in the shape of unlimited small beer or cider, sometimes failed to attract the desired quota of labourers. It was not that the tempting offers were discarded, but rather that there was no one to discard them. There was no reserve, as heretofore, of men anxiously looking out for a day's work. They had fled from the fields; a bare crew remained, just sufficient to work the ship in fair weather, but there were no supernumeraries, no stowaways even, to man the pumps when a crisis arrived. In a year of average sunshine this would not have mattered; but no successful antidote has yet been discovered to repeated showers of rain during the ticklish operation of ingathering. In years to come no doubt the missing nostrum will be duly supplied. The farmer will press a button, and his crops will fall in symmetrical lines to the earth; a second, and they will rise in orderly sheaves and shocks; a third, and they will be spirited in a moment of time to his garner, or range themselves in comely ricks, or betake themselves whithersoever he may desire, perhaps to the market itself, returning in a new golden shape to their expectant master. But that will not come to pass just yet, for all the strides of mechanics and electricity. For the present the husbandman must even take his chance, like the rest of us, "with heigh-ho! the wind and the rain"; and, unhappily for him, his interests are, more than the rest, at the mercy of the barometer.

Obviously, then, it is not mere caprice that urges the rank and file of English villages to abandon their native hills and dales and seek a living elsewhere. Though hands be skilful and arms as brawny as ever, iron arms are cheaper, and fingers that work by steam more amenable to discipline than flesh and blood can be. When, therefore, he finds the reaping and threshing of his fathers superseded by the new labour-saving appliances, and nothing left for himself but the occasional pursuits of sowing and hoeing, the rustic must needs think it is time to be gone. At least, if too old himself to make a move, he will impress upon his children the necessity of striking out a new path. And in these days he will probably address hearers who are not only open to conviction, but are already eager to tempt fortune under another sky, though it be no further distant than the nearest manufacturing town. For many influences have of late years been at work to foster the spirit of adventure and the love of change, and they have nothing to do with the farmer's inability to provide employment for so many hands as formerly. In any case, agriculture being what it now is, necessity would have thinned the dwellers in the cottages, for the mind of Hodge, if not abnormally nimble, is nevertheless quite capable of reasoning that without work there can be no pay, and without pay no means of honest livelihood. But necessity has been well seconded by inclination. The day is long past when the villager was the obedient servant of the squire and the parson, inclined to believe that he was made of an altogether inferior material, and fearing nothing so much as the loss of their countenance. He has discovered—partly through his own observation and research, and still more, perhaps, through the persistent hammering of journeymen agitators of various complexions—that he has not only a soul of his own, but a body entirely at his own disposal. Time was when father

and sons worked together in the same fields under the same master, and scarcely realized that there was a world beyond the parish bounds, or at any rate the county town. But now it is a rare case to find a complete family. If the father still labours in the fields of his youth, the sons are scattered; one, it may be, is in New Zealand, another in America, a third in London, a fourth in Birmingham. Often it is not known with any certainty where they all are; it is perfectly plain where they are not—they are no longer at home.

Difficulties in respect of work and wages are by no means confined to the country. Yet everybody assumes that he can be usefully and remuneratively employed in the town, until bitter experience destroys the delusion. But rural life in modern times presents, especially to the youthful mind, other disabilities which are in no way connected with wages and work. Perhaps it was never so charming as the poets would have us believe; at least, it may fairly be doubted whether the idyllic happiness with which they have credited it would have ever been endorsed beyond the confines of Arcadia. We are invited to observe the general air of hilarity pervading the carter and the ploughman,—“How jocund did they drive their team afield!” Whatever may have been the prevailing rustic temperament in Gray's century, it exhibits in our own assuredly a very meagre proportion of jocundity. Jocund, forsooth!—they are at the very nadir of dulness and depression. It would be pleasant could we satisfy ourselves that it was ever otherwise. In the absence of ocular proof we must fall back upon the records, no doubt more or less highly coloured, which have come down to us. By the light of these it would certainly seem that the spirits of the countryman have sunk to an abnormally low ebb. The brook babbles as musically as ever, the song of the throstle has lost none of its “linked sweetness,” the glory of the golden gorse still charms our eyes

as it charmed the eyes of Linnæus; but Theocritus himself could detect no corresponding blitheness in the man who now passes his life amid these fair surroundings. Why is it that he has become so stolid, so uninterested—alas! so uninteresting? Why is it that the country, even though work were abundant and wages liberal, would fail to keep its sons at home?

One answer to these questions is presumably to be found in the changed conditions of social life. It is still, and let us hope it will always be, an agreeable experience to exchange from time to time the exhausted air of cities for the pure breezes of the hill-side. We do not stay long enough to become conscious of anything like monotony; many of us honestly regret that we are forced to hurry back so soon. Least of all do we lament the absence of those festive customs which once made the country almost as lively as the town. We go in quest of rural scenery, rural fare, rural peace and quietness, and these being happily discovered and enjoyed, our holiday is complete. It is nothing to us that there are no distractions, no amusements; it is even a distinct relief to be quit of such things for a while, and to throw ourselves unreservedly into the arms of the Great Mother. Probably we do not for a moment consider how it would be if we were doomed to spend, not an occasional fortnight, but a whole lifetime, in her company, with no more variety than falls to the lot of Mr. and Mrs. Hodge, and with household arrangements on the same scale as theirs. For them, however, it is in truth a very different matter. They have long ago ceased to derive, if indeed they ever derived, any special satisfaction from living face to face, as it were, with Nature; it is notorious that genuine country-folk are deplorably ignorant of natural history. For them, life too often means a mere grind, year in year out, illumined by none of the mild dissipation which once, if we are to believe the chroniclers, added a gentle zest to

what must always have been a somewhat tedious existence, soured, as it not seldom is by periodically recurring exigencies, of which their few weekly shillings will rarely allow them to become quite independent. In a large village there may yet survive some poor semblance of animation, but an outlying hamlet must be, for all the social amenities it affords, a very abomination of desolation. Morality, it may be, stands higher now than formerly, but it has been purchased at the cost of all hilarity. It seems a pity that the two cannot exist together. Some good judges are of opinion that in many of our villages neither the one nor the other is now to be detected; the people are neither good nor gay. Possibly this is a libel; let us, at any rate, give them credit for being as decorous as they are dull, until our own experience proves the contrary.

We may take it for granted that no milkmaid has been known for many a long year to sing Kit Marlowe's "smooth song," as was the habit of her kind in old Izaak's day. Singing or silent, she is rarely visible in modern meadows. She and her simple leisurely ways must have begun to disappear from rural economy so soon as it became possible to transport the milk a hundred miles from cow to consumer. There is no time left for singing now, when at all hazards a certain train must be caught, or so many precious gallons will be wasted. The milk-farmer of to-day is far too practical a person to engage the service of winsome Maudlin. His milkmaids in all likelihood are made of sterner stuff than that light-hearted damsel who "cast away all care and sung like a nightingale." With her, however, has departed a cheery type which the country could ill afford to lose, if it was to retain its character for the poetry of hand-service. She is gone with the smock-frocks and the harvest-homes. At the celebration of the latter it is probable that she used to play a prominent part, but she can

hardly be pictured in connection with its now universal substitute, the harvest-thanksgiving. Once again it must be acknowledged that a good deal of harmless merriment has been sacrificed, and in lieu of it the peasant has received what must, in his eyes at least, be eminently unsubstantial in comparison. The wildest freaks of harvest - home can never have warranted its suppression. It was at any rate one of the few red-letter days to which the farmer's hard-worked, but cheerful, staff could look forward. It bred and fostered a pleasant feeling of mutual regard between master and men for which we now look in vain. Those were the days when a grandfather, father, and son might now and again be seen working on one farm, and when a service of from forty to fifty years' duration was considered nothing extraordinary. Each labourer could, and did, then take a personal interest, nay, cherish a sense of actual co-partnership, in the acres which he helped to cultivate. But both farmers and farm-men are now continually on the move. There is no longer a wholesome feeling of interdependence, but in its place too often a condition of veiled hostility, apt at critical moments to break out into open warfare or summary desertion. Hodge is now, politically, as good a man as his master, and the fact has been so dinned into his ears by pestilent agitators, that at length he has become aware, not indeed of the real meaning and value of his vote, but of his increasing importance as a member of provincial society. He must be coaxed and his humours carefully consulted, if he is to condescend to work on the land. With the best intentions in the world, the master sometimes finds it a hard matter to avoid wounding his sensitive prejudices, for he suffers in these days from hyperæsthesia, a dangerous malady from which his forefathers were absolutely free.

The harvest festival is usually held in the early days of October, and the

parson is in many cases braced for the occasion by a holiday of six weeks, or longer, from which he has just returned full of health and appreciation of foreign travel. He still wears on his manly brow the record in bronze of his feats as an Alpine climber. We must do him the justice to suppose that he is conscious of no incongruity when he mounts his elaborately beflowered pulpit and implores his humble hearers to be unceasingly thankful for the good gifts which Providence showers upon them. Peradventure the ingathering of the fruits of the earth in his own neighbourhood has been attended with heart-breaking loss and disappointment. It matters not. Farmer Giles is half ruined and wholly disgusted; he is implored to render thanks for the excellent harvest in Chili and Manitoba. The grain of Farmer Stubbs lies rotting in the fields; "My brother, be thankful, the crops in Hungary and the south of Russia are far above the average." If his words really carried weight, this would be a melancholy view in the eyes of his agricultural parishioners, but they fall for the most part on deaf ears. All attention is directed to the effective dressing of the church, which his daughters have compassed with their usual skill. Curiously enough, there is hardly any wheat to be seen,—it is too commonplace; but the long trails of russet bramble-leaves and the brilliant cornel-berries certainly look extremely well. Does it, perhaps, sometimes strike the rheumatic hedger and ditcher, once a foremost hand with scythe and sickle, that, pretty as it all is, a good supper of beef and beer would be a surer passport to his stock of gratitude? His work is, and always has been, surely much harder than the parson's, but holidays are unknown to him. He is old enough, maybe, to remember many changes: on the whole, could he honestly deliver his soul, would he admit that they have been changes for the better? He can call to mind a time when the church services indeed were fewer and less showy.

but the parson took no regular holiday, and somehow seemed to have more to bestow on his poorer neighbours than parsons have now. The parish was not left each year for weeks together in the charge of a stranger, nor used the vicarage to be let at so many guineas a week to no matter what species of tenant provided the rent was duly forthcoming. If he were a reader of *The Guardian* or *The Church Times*, he would be fairly amazed at the frantic struggle among incumbents with eligible parsonages to secure, in the first place, a handsome sum for the use of house and garden during the months of August and September, and, secondly, some sort of substitute, the cheaper the better (say, at a guinea a week and the privilege of riding a wall-eyed cob) for the benefit of the few poor sheep in the wilderness.

Absenteeism, however, is after all neither so rampant nor so serious among the clergy as among the landed gentry. Religious observances can always be discharged decently and in order so long as there is a duly qualified minister on the spot. He may not be the legally constituted holder of the benefice, for the duties are not essentially personal ; nay, a little variety in the pulpit is sometimes held to be even salutary. But a country gentleman cannot sell or let his house, and pass on to a stranger, with the lease or title-deeds, the local interests and responsibilities which are in his family the growth of many generations. No wonder the country is dull when those whose traditions are bound up with all that was once so blithe and neighbourly are compelled to pitch their tents elsewhere. Probably no one regrets the change more than themselves. Through no fault of their own many of them have been forced in recent years to watch their estates becoming more and more encumbered, until finally the last straw is laid, and they and the old home must part company. They are necessarily succeeded by one who knows not Hodge, who possibly does

not care to know him, and who certainly cannot inspire him with the affection and reverence bestowed as a matter of course upon a county family as old as the hills. Mere money makes no great impression on the genuine countryman, and the modern plutocrat who in buying "a place" thinks also to acquire a fee simple of the loyalty of his cottagers is usually mistaken. His coming is felt to break the continuity of things and to encourage the already prevalent spirit of unrest. It is one nail more in the coffin of the Old Style.

Merry England was so called not for the festive character of its metropolitan music-halls, or the reckless gaiety of its beanfeasts and Bank Holidays, but for the cheerful demeanour of its country parishes. It was the country which maintained the national reputation for good fellowship. A visit to the shires is recommended by Burton himself as distinctly anti-pathetic to melancholy. He would scarcely recommend it at the close of the nineteenth century. He is all for rural hilarity. "For my part," he declares, "I will subscribe to the king's declaration, and was ever of that mind, that May games, wakes, and Whitsun ales, &c., if they be not at unseasonable hours, may justly be permitted. Let them freely feast, sing, and dance, have their puppet-plays, hobby-horses, tabors, crowds, bagpipes, &c., play at ball and barley-breaks, and what sports and recreations they like best." The list almost takes one's breath away. Who ever hears of a hobby-horse or a barley-break in a modern village? Even the dance on the green is a rare phenomenon ; where it survives it is usually for the benefit of a class superior to the Williams and Audreys. The latter have lost all their agility, and tread a measure with the utmost diffidence and angularity, as though they had laid too severely to heart the ancient theory that no man would ever dance till he was drunk. There is nothing to take the place of the frolics which have died out, and each succeeding decade has to



mourn the loss of some further shred of festivity which helped ever so little to break the dead level of monotony. The fairs are a mere ghost of their former jolly selves. No doubt they did occasionally lead to scenes in which the bounds of propriety were treated with scant regard; liberty, as from time to time it always has done and always will do, degenerated into license. Orgies came to pass here and there: the chimes were heard at midnight; and, in the small hours when decent folks should be sleeping the sleep of the just, the parish constable's head was apt to be broken. But orgies and broken heads were not abolished by the suppression or mutilation of rustic gatherings; they were merely transferred to the towns. Sometimes, indeed, business fell off to such a degree that the fairs died a natural and lingering death; railways diverted the course of trade; competition ruined one district and enhanced the importance of another. But whatever the cause of their decline, and whatever the arguments against their continuance, it will readily be conceded that with their collapse there also departed a highly-valued fund of harmless amusement which made a landmark in the peasant's weary round.

No coaches now thunder through the village street; no red-coated guard with his yard of tin wakes the echoes of the country-side, scaring the lapwing and rousing the harsh challenge of the jay. True, there is during the summer months a feeble revival, or rather imitation, of the coaching age, but it is, and is well known to be, a mere whim indulged in by a few who can afford to lose time and money. Nor does it penetrate into the genuine country. Nothing can seriously interfere with the sway of the railroad until some means of locomotion independent alike of steam and of horse-flesh becomes possible and popular. But the train, though it brings town and country nearer together, does not supply the place of the coach. It

takes away more and more of the villagers, but it promotes no festivity, engenders no affectionate interest. Rather it rides rough-shod over old customs and associations, and symbolizes very faithfully the insane hurry and bustle of the present age.

It remains to sum up very briefly the causes which tend, as each new census emphatically proves, to diminish our rural population. In some of them the cause can hardly be distinguished from the effect. Many cheerful customs have fallen through owing to the lack of interest and support; on the other hand, sometimes the lack of patronage—that is, the lack of people—may in a measure be due to the dulness induced by the extinction of the customs. Up to a certain point it is of course advantageous that the population of agricultural parishes should be kept within due bounds. The country offers to the poor but very few opportunities of employment save on the land. A village will be able to support half-a-dozen small tradesmen, but seldom more. The bulk of the male inhabitants must be occupied in the fields. It would therefore be manifestly embarrassing if no one would budge. Happily there has very seldom been any apprehension on this score. The fear is lest the life of the farm-labourer should become so distasteful that our reputation, as a people, for good husbandry will be seriously impaired. The improved, or at least expanded, teaching of the last twenty years has opened many rustic minds to facts which would otherwise have been very gradually assimilated. It has become tolerably well known that life in the town is on the whole a better paid and infinitely more exhilarating experience than in the woods, the meadows, or the corn-fields. The hours of work are shorter, the food is more varied and perhaps better, holidays are not uncommon, wages are higher. There is not the same exposure to weather, and in case of illness there are facili-

ties in the shape of hospital comforts which are conspicuous only by their absence in a remote hamlet. Again, there is comparative independence, and, at the same time, the means are abundant of gratifying man's naturally social and sociable tendencies. To plough or hoe all day without exchanging a look or a word with a fellow-creature is excellent for purposes of contemplation, but it is dull. In the town there is constant motion, an endless stream of human life going, passing, returning. There are a thousand petty incidents, each more or less interesting, for one that happens on the farm. Moreover there are definite amusements for play-hours. It is perhaps fortunate that in the country so little leisure is possible to the working man. He would not know what to do with himself in his enforced idleness. None of the old recognized country pastimes have survived, or none in which he can comfortably bear a hand. His very children do not get their cricket and football as do their cousins in the suburb. His existence is utterly devoid of speculation. There are possibilities in every town, but none in the country, where the peasant's highest hopes are restricted to regular employment all the year round. He may have in him the makings of a Hampden or a Milton, but neither he, nor his neighbours, will ever know it. He can never rise beyond the position of head-carter.

Obviously he cannot save money ; and unless he be young enough to emigrate, he must live and die an eminently useful man, but wholly innocent of change or entertainment.

Such, then, are some of the reasons which seem to account for the desertion of the fields. They may be stated succinctly as want of work and abhorrence of dulness. Perhaps the one person left in humble life who can appreciate the delights of the country is the poacher. His is a calling to which hilarity is foreign ; he never finds the country dull so long as game is plentiful and his ear and eye do not play him false. But he stands alone. The presumption is that in days to come he will pursue his illegal but fascinating way with even less fear of interruption than at present. For, unless some sudden revulsion of feeling ensues, the human population of those regions which he explores so carefully will grow gradually less and less, until finally a day must arrive when the farmer, if he is to farm any longer, will have to manipulate his crops by the aid of automata. The attractions of the towns and the colonies will soon prove too strong a magnet for the few remaining labourers ; and the economy of hand-service which he inaugurated to save his own pocket he will be compelled to practise still more completely in order to save himself from utter ruin.

ARTHUR GAYE.

## SIR MICHAEL.

A FANTASY ON AN ALTAR-PIECE OF PERUGINO. (*Nat. Gall. No. 288.*)

THE sun of a bright February afternoon, already making its power felt on our favoured southern coast, lit up a motley and excited crowd in the white market-place of a little fishing town whose general appearance has not much changed since the day we speak of, now nearly four centuries ago. Room was made for the township and for the port by the southward opening of a rich and warm valley fed with the benignant sun and moisture that England knows not east of the Exe. All ways in the village finally led to the market-place, and out of the market-place one came down to the foreshore by a fairly well-kept road. On the north side a lane wound upwards through the valley overlooked from a slight eminence by the Manor House, which commanded a view far to east and west over the changing tints of the Channel sea. At this time, however, there was evidently trouble of some kind stirring, and yet no sign from the Manor. In truth, Sir Guy Trevanion had been away for some years, and no one knew exactly when to look for his return. The family had kept themselves clear of treasons and forfeitures through the Wars of the Roses, but were suspected of Yorkist leanings; and shortly after Henry the Seventh's power was established, Sir Guy had received a friendly hint from a high quarter that he would not do amiss to spend some time in honourable foreign adventures. Accordingly he had betaken himself with a picked band of men-at-arms, like other good knights of many nations, to the service of those Catholic and politic princes Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon. His wife received intelligence from time to time, and it was understood that

Sir Guy was doing right good service against the Moors, and had been specially honoured by Queen Isabella. It was also told that he had gotten for a sworn brother-in-arms a certain knight of Malta, known as Sir Luke, an Italian gentleman whose deeds against the Infidels, aided by family connexions with a prince of the Church, had earned him the right to think and say many things which might have exposed the soul of an ordinary citizen to the paternal care of the nearest spiritual court, and his body and goods to the temporal consequences of excommunication and penance, or severer forms of proceeding.

Now Port Enoch, being in an English diocese, was also not unblest with the jurisdiction of a bishop and an archdeacon, and all things a Court Christian ought to have about it. In those days there was a new archdeacon, a business-like clerk whose approved orthodoxy was well matched with a keen appetite for fees. As the Trevanions were understood to have no love for officials and summoners, and there was not much money in the village, Port Enoch had mostly been let alone by the archdeacon's predecessors. But the absence of the lord with the best of his men seemed now to offer a fair opening; and a subject was not wanting. An old retainer of the Manor, by name Jenifer Datcher, had long been noted by ecclesiastical authority as being suspected of heresy, or sorcery, or both. The substance of her offence was neither worse nor better than that for many years she had been the wise woman of the village, and her cures had been more numerous and successful than any common lay person's ought to be. She once even brought round a girl reputed

to be possessed, on whom the regular process of exorcism had failed; which manifestly was an enormous and censurable presumption. Most chiefly, however, the archdeacon reflected that, by setting the process of his court in motion against her while the powers of resistance were still weak, he could scarcely fail to make something out of it in the way of fees, fines, or, still better, a moderate amount of ostensible fees, and a more substantial bribe from the Manor House for settling the affair on easy terms. Therefore it was that on this February afternoon Port Enoch was invaded by a sompnour (if one may preserve the Chaucerian form), together with the secular arm in the shape of a sheriff's officer and a somewhat ragged fraction of the power of the county. Having entered the village by a coast road, they found themselves confronted in the market-place by the available men of Port Enoch; men of a sturdy breed, who, though inferior in numbers, were not disposed to yield to archdeacon or sheriff without dispute. They had no one leader and no plan of action, but their words were of the kind that show a readiness to pass into deeds if a leader is found.

"Attach our Jenifer to archdaken's court, will 'ee? 'Hath a-done us more good here to Port Enoch, vather and zon, these vorty year, than ever yüü did with your trashy trade."

"*Significavit*, zaid 'ee! 'tis more like to signify broken mazzards to some of 'ee, true as yüü'm there."

Such were some of the more quotable remarks of the men of Port Enoch. Meanwhile the sompnour, a fat little man with a foxy head, was waxing impatient and urging the officer to risk an assault, when a diversion was caused by the sudden appearance of Lady Trevanion. She was followed by a dozen of stout men and lads from the Manor, who quietly reinforced the groups of fishermen. The 'ady went from one to another with words of encouragement.

"What! shall these shavelings have away our people before our face? Must I take down the old sword that Sir Hugh bore at Lewes, and lead you myself? Billy Beer, they call you a boy, but you have the stuff of three such men as those. Peter Cottle, they say you be an old ancient man, but you are full young enough to beat a sompnour's pate; and hark——" Here Lady Trevanion whispered something to Peter Cottle which caused his eyes to open enormously, and a flash of joyful intelligence, promptly subdued with some effort, to pass over his face. She continued aloud: "You, Peter, take the command. Dick Pengelly, you aid him. Do your best, friends all, as if Sir Guy were here, and when he comes back let him know how you deal with apparitors and such cattle that come prying and sneaking in Port Enoch."

Notwithstanding these brave words the forces of the law spiritual and temporal were obviously more than a match for the defenders. But the spiritual officer did not want a scandal, and also had no personal love of strife at any time; and the temporal officer had no great mind for fighting in that cause. Accordingly the sompnour began to parley. Lady Trevanion disappeared with two or three followers, leaving Peter Cottle as chief spokesman. It is needless to relate the negotiations, which were carried on in a diffuse and rich dialect. After about an hour's talk the representative of the Church declared that his patience was exhausted, and gave the order to advance. If he had kept a look-out to the flanks he might have seen how certain of Lady Trevanion's men stole down the sides of the market-place and posted themselves at the openings of the lanes. And if he had listened, he might possibly have heard something from the higher ground. But he neither saw nor heard anything out of the common. To the surprise and relief, for somewhat different reasons, of the sompnour and the sheriff's officer, the men of Port Enoch, seem-

ingly for want of any coherent order, fell back almost at once; and already the way seemed clear to Jenifer Datcher's house, where that person was keeping up her reputation for uncanny ways by looking out of the window as if she were not in the least concerned. But the secular officer's ear, more exercised in such things than the sompnour's, now caught above the general murmur and clamour a new sound of ill omen. It could be nothing else; it was the ringing beat of hoofs on the cobblestones, mixed with the clink of iron. And before one could ask what more it meant, the retiring crowd suddenly parted at a sign from old Peter Cottle, the only person who did not look surprised, and a swaying, flashing mass rushed out from the northern lane into the sun, whose rays, now nearly level, turned the following dust-cloud into a fiery mist, and the weapons seen through it into changeful lightnings; and as the thundering mass came forth it took form, and spread out into a front of half-a-dozen men-at-arms, whose spears all came down to the rest with one click and remained there with terrible exactness of dressing. In the centre was the well-known blazon of Trevanion, and beside it was a black armour of outlandish fashion marvellously wrought. But indeed there was no time to study these niceties, for it seemed to every one of the archdeacon's and the sheriff's people that a horse and man were specially intent on riding him down, and the point of a long spear was coming straight into his own particular face; and besides, as every one of them thought in the same fraction of a second, it was but a scurvy quarrel for an Englishman to peril his head in. So there was a feeble scattering flight of arrows and maybe a score of stones thrown, and then the powers ecclesiastical and temporal did what half-disciplined levies charged home by trained cavalry have always done and always will do so long as there is fighting in the world,—they fled in confusion, and, in this case, in the one direction open

to them. Only the coast road by which they had reached the village was now cut off by the spring tide. Nothing was left for it but surrender, and they had not even the satisfaction of yielding themselves to men of worship. It was Peter Cottle who received their submission with a serene chuckle and took measures for their immediate safe keeping, the strange knight in the black armour looking on with silent approval.

A well-grown boy, almost of age to bear arms, came riding sharply down with two or three of the men and called to the knight: "Sir Luke, we have need of you up at the Manor. Come and see to father."

"What, Sir Guy hurt?" said the other. "I lost him in the press, and thought he had stayed to order matters up there. It is not grave? I knew not any of us had taken harm."

"I pray not, sir," answered the boy. "but I cannot tell. You know he was riding with his iron cap; he would not put on a helm for this gear; a stone caught him on the head, and they took him up senseless. They say you have learnt much skill among the Moors."

"Nay, with or without skill I must be at my companion's side. I suppose these good folk will keep sufficient ward; and so, my young friend, take me back with you."

"No fear for that, Master Walter and Sir Knight," said Cottle. "We'll warrant you for they varmint."

## II.

"'Tis nothing, Lord be praised therefor," said Jenifer Datcher, looking up, as Walter Trevanion and Sir Luke entered the half-lighted hall, from where she was bending over Sir Guy. "'Twould never have mazed 'en so, but 'a rode in the heat fasting."

Sir Luke made a rapid inspection, nodded approval of Jenifer's very simple treatment, and produced a silver flask from which he sprinkled a few drops on Sir Guy's face. As their heads showed together in the light of



Jenifer's candle, a stranger would have thought that an English host was tending his foreign guest, for Sir Guy was as dark as many men of southern lands, and Sir Luke was of that square-built and fair-complexioned North Italian type which still bears witness to the faithfulness of Fra Angelico's pencil. The unknown fluid spread a subtle and refreshing perfume. Jenifer looked on in sincere admiration, Lady Trevanion with delight, Walter and the other children with a mixture of joy, curiosity, and fear.

"Yes," said Sir Luke, "there are things to be learnt from these Infidels. And they fought like gentlemen too. He is coming round." In a few moments Sir Guy opened his eyes, raised himself on his hands, and began to speak.

"Have 'ee got an apple, sonnies? West-country fruit, west-country speech,—better than all the golden pomegranates of Spain. What's that? In the nick of time, brother Luke, to learn archdeacons to archidiaconise here,—good hap that I sent on that messenger! Well thought on, Lucy; a good device, and of a true soldier's wife; I could not better it; ay, hold them in talk a while, hold them in talk—What, Walter, wilt ride with us? A good boy and well grown since I saw thee, but too young,—what, not be gainsaid? Take him then, Gilbert, and have a good care of him,—shalt see if the story-books say true that Cornish knights be men of no worth. Forward, men! ah, see the fat sompnour run,—eleu in there! fetch 'en out! Jenifer's safe enough. But you are Jenifer—and where am I? They never stood up to us, the rogues. All friends here,—and yet I seem to have come by a clout on the head."

A few words from Lady Trevanion and Sir Luke, and the ministration, this time inwardly, of some other strange liquor, restored Sir Guy to full consciousness. "Well," said he, "I have dreamt goodly dreams; something belike of the tales Sir Luke and

I had been telling on board ship,—I know not. But who be these?"

Dick Pengelly with two or three companions now came forward, having been sent up by Peter Cottle to report and take further orders. After being assured that his lord was doing well and could hear him, Pengelly explained the situation in language which, for the reader's ease and patience, must be freely abridged and reduced to book English.

"Some of us were for holding a court upon 'en, me being the reeve, so please you, and the less writing the better, we said, for if so be we had one that was a book schollard and could keep a roll, 'twould only be twisted some way against us if ever it came to 'sizes; but Peter Cottle did say 'twouldn't be any justiceable sort of rights without Sir Guy there, so we thought 'twas a pity to have nothing to tell 'ee, and we handselled 'en some such rights as might seem belonging by nature, till you could serve 'en out proper justice."

"Paid in their own money," said Sir Luke, "*sine figura et strepitu judicii.*"

"We could never pay 'en with no Latin," continued Dick; "but the bailiff, being one that in a manner serves the King, and that we'd no such bitter quarrel with, we gave 'en his choice fair and plain, to be rolled in a vuzzy vaggot or to dang bishop and archdaken. So 'a zaid out like a true man, that I could like 'en well for it all my life days, 'twould have been meat and drink to him, saving the virtue of his office, if 'a could have danged 'en out loud these vower hours and more; and so 'a did most free and cheerful. And then we broft 'en with joy and gladness into the Blue Dragon, as the sinner that repenteth, and zet 'en down with a cup of good zider. And the sompnour, being of a more black-hearted and dangerous fashion, and 'customed to bite mankind, we let 'en bide safe in stocks for to know your honour's pleasure."

"All very well done," said Lady

Trevanion, after a consultation with Sir Guy. "My husband bids me speak for him, and thank you all. You may bring up the sompnour here in an hour or so ; our friend Sir Luke is almost as good a clerk as a knight, and would fain say some profitable words to him. Let the sheriff's men have a drink of cider all round, and our free peace ; they had little stomach for this business from the first, and will have none to begin again. And so, good speed !"

In a short time Sir Guy, who really needed rest and food more than anything else, was pretty much himself again, and the children, who were a little disappointed that he had not brought home at least five Moorish kings in golden chains, began to question him about his campaigns. Lady Trevanion, however, supported by Jenifer and Sir Luke, insisted on Sir Guy not being called on for his adventures till the morrow. "Well then, father," said Hugh, the second boy, lifting up his large blue eyes from those of the hound Bruno, with whom he had been holding an intent conversation without words, "are you strong enough to tell us the pretty things you said you had been dreaming ?"

"I think I might do that," said Sir Guy, "the rather that, as I have often noted in such cases, I should have clean forgotten my dream to-morrow morning if I put off telling it." And this was the dream Sir Guy told.

### III.

"As we rode down upon that rabble I marked right in front of me a sort of lubberly half-grown boy, and with some little ado I guided my spear that I might pass only near enough to frighten him, for I had no mind to shed blood. Then I saw that he lifted a stone in his hand, and I knew no more till I seemed to be unarmed and alone, in a marvellous great waste country under a gray sky. Anon there came a fellowship riding,

but their going made no sound. And some rode as they were princes and great folk, dukes and bishops and knights and ladies of worship, and some as merchants and citizens, and some as poor and needy people. But all was gray as beechen ashes, riders and horses and apparel, and none spoke to other, but ever they looked one way, and some were of a mild countenance, and others looked grimly as if they loathed that journey ; yet none might turn back nor leave the troop. Then I could see a young man that rode beside them, and he wore a plain close hood upon his head, and no manner of arms nor ornaments, nor so much as a staff in his hand. But his face was as the face of a captain, and wheresoever he signed with his hand, there they must needs all go. So they passed on and left me alone. Then I was ware how the moor sloped downward, and in the narrow valley there ran a full dark water in flood. And there was a bridge made all of gray steel, and no path thereon, but it came to an edge as keen as was ever any Damascus blade that I saw in Spain ; and I knew that I must cross that bridge or be lost in the flood. For so it was in that land that none might never turn back whence he had come. And as I stood sore amazed, lightly there came running along the edge a ball of golden thread spinning itself out, and ran up into my hand as it were a live thing. So I took the thread, and therewith I walked boldly on the edge, and in the midst of the bridge I looked down, and there in the flood was a barge made fast by enchantment, and a loathly fiend therein which had the sompnour's head, and with a great staff beat down folk that strove to lift their heads out of the water. And on the other side there sat an angel in glory spinning the thread, but when I came nigh to her I saw well that it was Jenifer Datcher ; and straightway all vanished, and I went again a long journeying over good and bad ground, enduring divers perils. And

ever I knew that my soul had made all that world of mine own deeds, and none other might come near me for good or ill.

"At last I came to a place where there was a great and deep mire, greater than Aune Head Mire on Dartmoor; and it was a darkling light so that I could not see where the sound way went through. Then I was ware of little shining creatures that went crawling and hopping before me, and by their shining I followed on the good path; and I knew not what they might be. But one of them spoke and said, 'Sir, ye mind well how ever ye taught your children to despise none of God's creatures, nor to call none of them foul or ugly; and now we be toads and efts which they saved alive according to your will and teaching, and therefore have we not failed you in this adventure whereas none other help of man or beast might avail you.'"

"Oh, father," interrupted Ermen-gard, who was barely old enough to follow the thread of the tale, "we have got the two biggest and wisest of all the toads; and you must come and see them the first thing in the morning; and they are so wise that we call them Archbishop Morton and Bishop Fox."

"And who then shall be arch-deacon?" asked Sir Guy.

"That is soon told, sir," said Walter. "We have taken the greediest and most ill-favoured of the last little pigs to be archdeacon."

Then Sir Guy continued:—

"When I was past that mire it was clear day, and I came to a green meadow where was a pavilion, and thereby stood a knight all armed, a young man of a passing fair countenance. His armour was of blue steel, and of the finest work that ever might be made by any armourer of Milan, and he was apparelled at all points for justing; and he had a shield with no blazon nor other device upon it, save only a pair of golden balances. Then said this knight to me, 'Fair knight,

ye are welcome here, and now shall ye prove yourself upon me, for the custom of this passage is such that no knight may pass here but if he just with me.' 'Sir,' said I, 'ye see well that I am a man forspent and unarmed, and methinketh it were small worship for you to have ado with me.' 'As for that,' said he, 'look if ye be not better apparelled than ye think.' Right so I looked round me, and there I saw mine own armour, and my good horse, and two goodly spears. Then I thanked him of his courtesy, 'And now,' I said, 'I will well dress me for to just with you; but first I will require you to tell me your name, and what manner of knight ye be.' 'Sir,' said he, 'I may not now tell you my name, but ye may call me the Knight of the Balances; and know that I am a knight that serve the lord of all this country, and of such conditions that it should be no disworship to just with me for any knight or prince that is upon the earth.' 'Ye say well,' said I, and so I armed myself, and was right glad to feel my arms and my horse under me, and so I departed to gain my distance. But before I could make ready my spear, suddenly there rose up out of the earth between me and that knight as it were a wall of clear fire, hotter than any furnace, that it flamed up to the sky on either hand as far as ever I could see. Then came a voice that said, 'Ride now through this fire, or be for ever shamed and unworthy of knighthood.' And I looked on either hand again, and there were other knights not a few that were dressed to ride likewise, and some of them were Saracens. And I heard them say through all the noise of the fire, 'Ride with a good courage, for we are all here of your fellowship.' So I commended me to God, and in great amazement rode straight where the fire burnt, and I was in a marvelous great light, that all my armour glowed therein, but I passed out as whole as ever I was; and I looked back, and where the fire had been was a garden of the fairest roses and lilies.

Then said one of these knights, 'Wit ye well, Sir Guy, that we be your adversaries whom in your life days ye have fought knightly and courteously withal, and for that cause have we come to do you service in this adventure.' And with that they were all vanished, and there was only that young Knight of the Balances with me. 'Well,' said he, 'ye are well sped with this last adventure, and now I dare say that we two shall just without fear of enchantment or other hindrance.' So we departed and aventured our spears, and ran together with all the speed we might; and I brake my spear fairly on that knight, but for all he was young to look upon and of no great bigness, he justed so mightily that he bore me to the earth. Then I avoided my horse, and drew my sword to fight with him on foot. But he would not suffer me, and came to me with his sword sheathed, saying, 'Ye shall have no more ado with me to-day, for ye have done as much as a good knight ought; and, Sir Guy, if I had not well known you I should never have bidden you to just with me. Likewise ye shall understand that I may not with my custom fight on foot with you, for I have drawn this sword but once in all time that the world was made, and shall draw it but once again in a day that I know not of.' Then forthwith I was ware that this knight was Michael the archangel, and I had great awe of him, and worshipped him. But he took me by the hand and made me good cheer, and bade me ride with him as knights used to ride in company: 'For,' said he, 'I shall bring you to my fellowship in the King's court. And my custom is to just in this manner with all good knights that have achieved the former adventures.'

"Then as we rode I asked of Saint Michael, 'Sir, I would know, if that I may, whether the like adventures befall bishops and churchmen and other clerkly men as well as knights. For methinketh it should not be convenient if bishops and abbots and other holy

men, which are not nor ought not to be men of their hands, should be enforced to just with you.' 'As for bishops and abbots,' said Michael, 'it may be that great plenty of them come to our court here, and it may be we have not such plenty that there must be a rule for them; but I shall tell you that for men of all conditions there be appointed fitting adventures, and a clerk shall be proved in clerkly things as ye were in knightly things. And when a great clerk is come to this passage, my brother Gabriel doth his office, and that is such that he and some of his fellowship come forth and require that clerk to dispute with them. And many times there be notable arguments holden, as at the coming of your countryman William of Occam. But of all clerkly men that have achieved this quest the greatest and most worshipful cheer was made for Dante of Florence, as ye may well guess by the vision that in his lifetime he saw.' 'Sir Michael,' said I, 'do kings and princes just even as other knights and so ride with you, or have ye other customs for them?' 'Yea,' said he, 'there be pageants and solemnities for just princes, after every one hath fulfilled his adventures as a man ought, for each after his worth; as for your English kings Alfred and Edward, and Frederick the Emperor of the Romans whom your clerks call *stupor mundi*.' 'Truly I have heard tell,' said I, 'that this Frederick was a great and a wise prince, but also they tell that he died excommunicate and in danger of Holy Church.' 'Well,' said Sir Michael, 'be that as it may, if we judged here with popes' judgment we should lose from our court many noble knights and princes, and wise clerks, and holy men and women of great charity, and that were overmuch pity. Yet for other causes that prince had shrewd adventures before he might win to the passage. And anon ye shall see stranger things, for I will bring you where the Soldan Saladin, whom ye call an infidel, is companion to Trajan of Rome and Rhipeus of

Troy in the eye of the eagle which is in the sphere of Jupiter.'

"Now we were come to the gate of a goodly city, and outside the gate was music and men and women dancing joyfully, and betwixt every two there danced a blessed angel, and made them all the cheer he might. And their wings were not like the wings of any bird, but of such colours as no earthly craftsman might make with glass work and stones of price, not if he were the master of all those of Venice. Then I marvelled whether these goodly sights were given in like measure to all who might win to that Holy City, or should be divers according to every one's conditions, for that the sight of an angel or of a saint may well be greater than a simple knight's wisdom may compass or his strength may endure. 'Sir Guy,' said Michael (although I had not spoken), 'of that ye have good reason to marvel, albeit I may not fully show you the truth thereof at this time. But wit ye well that according to our degrees we see after other manners than men in your mortal life see, and that is upon earth as well as here. For I could bring you in houses of religion where ye should see a plain brother in a bare cell, it may be writing in a book, and it may be painting on the wall, and in our sight he is a saint in passing great glory, and a host of angels ministering to him. And many times where ye see men oppressed of princes and great lords, and forjudged of treason and heresy, and finding no place to rest, there in the sight of the blessed these be princes of great estate, and the oppressors mean and foul to behold. And now,' said he, 'must I depart from you, for ye be full young in the things ye ought to learn, and my brother Raphael, who led the child Tobias, shall lead you into the city.' Then I perceived at the entering of the gate another angel unarmed, and he was of the most loving countenance and the most full of peace and charity to all people that ever might be seen or thought. And he took me by the

hand, and I saw no more shape or countenance of him, but only a great light, as if the heaven were covered in every part with stars as clear as the sun, the which light was made of the angels and archangels and blessed souls; and as their lights moved and shone, meseemed I understood in them without any word spoken more mysteries than ever all the clerks of Oxford and Paris could set forth in their books if they should all write for seven years. Moreover there was sung *Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth*, with such quiring and such instruments of music as I deemed not mortal ears could have heard. With that I knew I was not yet worthy to achieve that glorious quest to the uttermost, and so I awoke into this present world. But the music of the *Sanctus* seemed still in mine ears, and peradventure, if it shall so please God, in time to come some man that is worthy shall hear it more perfectly, and have such cunning of music that he may set it down, and such device of instruments that he may let play it withal."

IV.

"FATHER," said Hugh, "do you think Saint Michael will really just with us in heaven if we are good knights?"

"If you live as long as I hope you will, my sons," answered Sir Guy, "perhaps you may rather have to shoot with him in a hand-gun."

"What!" protested Walter, "the blessed Michael touch a thing that burns foul stinking powder, and slays a knight unawares like a knave! If it were honest shooting at butts, now, I am sure even an archangel might shoot a good round without any disworship. And then, under your favour, Sir Luke, I think for execution in the field I would choose a stout archer who can loose me half-a-dozen arrows while your gunner is fumbling with his tackle to make ready for one shot."

"You shall hear to-morrow," said



Sir Guy, "how Francisco Ramirez persuaded us otherwise at the siege of Malaga."

"Yes," added Sir Luke, "I love a good armour and a good sword as well as any man; but our fathers' armour is already old-fashioned, and who knows what the next generation will think of ours? I talked once in Milan with a singular good craftsman, a man of such skill in many masteries as God sends once in hundreds of years; his name is Leonardo, a painter, a worker in metals, I know not what else. His thoughts have run much on martial devices, and he told me his judgment that our sons will live, if we do not, to see these same hand-guns change the face of war. For bows and arrows may never be any stronger or better than they are, but guns will be bettered in every generation, and ways will be found to make them shoot quicker and straighter as well as stronger, and soon there will be no armour man can bear that will withstand their shot. And so our fine armourers' work, in which we excel all former ages, is like to be found a vain thing even when it has been brought to perfection."

"Well, Sir Luke, I will pray that Saint Michael, if he does take to new weapons, may still keep his tilting-armour by him, and a spear or two to break with old-fashioned folk."

"But may it not be, Sir Luke," said Hugh, "that if we give up heavy armour there will be all the more room for good sword-play?"

"Well thought on, my son," answered Sir Guy, "the guns are there, and we must take them for better or worse; but you may yet see the discomfiture of armour bring about the triumph of the sword."

The talk was interrupted by the appearance of Cottle and Pengelly bringing up the body of the sadly crestfallen sompnour. He began a voluble and rambling speech in which protestation and servility were hopelessly mixed.

"Good fellow," said Sir Guy, "there

is no need. I shall only desire you to give your company apart for a short space to this knight, my friend and guest. He is a stranger, and curious to know more of the admirable procedure of our Court Christian in England."

A short quarter of an hour had passed when the sompnour rushed back into the hall pale and breathless, and threw himself at Sir Guy's feet.

"As you are a Christian knight, sir!—for that I never gainsaid—in the way of grace and charity, and I will ever pray for you, bid this man undo his charms. He hath laid spells upon me; I am a man undone; they are in a tongue of Mahound and all the devils; Latin will never bite on it. You will not see a poor servant of the Church wither before your eyes! A counter-charm, there is nothing for it but a counter-charm! St. Nectan and St. Just forgive me if there be any sin; I perish else. At your mercy in any fair way of temporal reprisals, good Sir Guy, but not those fearful words."

The host signed consent to Sir Luke, who had followed more leisurely, and who now planted himself before the sompnour. Fixing his eyes on the sompnour's, and passing his hands over the sompnour's head with a kind of reversing motion, Sir Luke spoke thus in a solemn voice: "*Rafel—allez—mai—avec votre archidiacre—amech—au tresgrand—zabi—diable—almi—sans jour. In onomate Nembroth et Nabuchodonosor liberamus istum hominem desicut herebi machæra non pertransibit eum.*"

The sompnour recovered his self-possession in a moment. "Sir Guy," said he in his natural or rather usual manner, "for your courtesy in this matter much thanks; protesting nevertheless, as a humble apparitor and servant of the Church, and reserving to my superiors all competent jurisdiction over the divers assaults, contempts, and other enormities this day committed against authority both spiritual and temporal. And I would

warn you in all friendship, as a poor man may, that this strange knight puts you in danger of being noted for keeping company with one that is little better than an infidel."

An explosion of laughter was the reward of this official virtue.

"As for infidels," said Sir Luke, "you may tell your masters that Sir Guy and I have slain and captured more of them in these three years than any archdeacon in England has seen or is like to see dead or alive."

"You may tell them also," said Sir Guy, "that I bear special letters from King Ferdinand to our good lord King Henry, and if either bishop or archdeacon have a grievance against my guest or me, they may find us at the King's court within the octave of St. Matthias if they will. And now my people will give you some supper; but I answer for nothing if you let yourself be seen here again."

Next morning Sir Luke had a long talk with Jenifer Datcher. Afterwards, as he was showing the boys some Moorish feats of horsemanship, Hugh suddenly turned upon him: "Sir Luke, will you tell me a thing?"

"Surely," he answered, "if I know it and it be lawful for me to tell."

"Then was it really very dreadful language that you astounded the sompnour with?"

"He was partly right," said Sir Luke; "it was indeed the tongue of Mahound; nothing worse than good Arabic."

And that was perfectly true. But it is certain that Jenifer had not time to learn Arabic from Sir Luke, and that her cures in the village were thenceforth more remarkable than ever.

FREDERICK POLLOCK.

## NATIONAL PENSIONS.

THE cause of National Pensions has long been advocated by avowed Socialists, who look for the realisation of an ideal not unlike that of Plato's Republic. But it is only within the past year that the matter has attracted the attention of politicians and has entered upon the phase of practical discussion.

The arguments for a scheme of National Pensions are very simple. We have merely to look around us in order to see persons of apparent respectability who have been left in old age without any means of subsistence. There is no certain provision for them except the workhouse or a few shillings a week doled out by the parish. The Poor-Law system, we are told, causes unnecessary suffering and is out of keeping with the humanity of the present age; it is therefore the duty of the State to provide some other machinery for the protection of the poor from destitution.

To this contention the upholders of the present Poor-Law reply as follows. The promise of support in old age necessarily removes the most powerful incentive to work and to thrift. Our social system is based on the assumption that all should rely for their maintenance upon their own efforts. But we revolt from condemning any one to starvation. The Poor-Law is a concession to humanity, but must not be allowed to interfere with those influences on whose operation the welfare of the community at large depends. It offers food and shelter and clothing to the destitute; but the conditions of relief laid down by the Law must be strictly adhered to, and the life of dependence upon public charity must never be made as attractive as that which the lowest independent labourer can provide for himself.

Experience has shown that this condition can be properly preserved only by offering relief in the workhouse.

The advocates of the new departure admit the general truth of their opponents' contention; but they say that the Poor-Law has come to be in fact not merely the asylum of those who have failed in life through their own fault, but also the only home to which the industrious poor can look forward with certainty if they live to old age. These, they say, have a positive claim to some better provision.

The case has been put most forcibly by Mr. Chamberlain, and, as it seems to me that two radical fallacies underlie his position, it becomes necessary to consider it somewhat in detail. He asserts that "one in two of the labouring class, if he reaches the age of sixty, is almost certain to come *for his subsistence* to the Poor-Law." I wish first to call attention to the words which I have italicised. Mr. Chamberlain's figures are ultimately based upon returns of old-age pauperism, obtained about a year ago by Mr. Burt. This document shows the number of persons (exclusive of vagrants, lunatics, and certain other paupers), professedly over sixty years of age, who were, on August 1st, 1890, in receipt of relief from the Poor-Law in England and Wales. But Mr. Burt's return makes no allowance for those in receipt of mere medical relief. Now, medical relief is an item by which the number of paupers is enormously swelled. In 1890 the average number of paupers in London was 106,000; in the same year the number of medical orders issued was 119,000. A return of paupers which includes those who have received nothing except some trifling medical relief, which

they would have obtained elsewhere if the parish office had not been handy, is not very instructive. The receipt of a bottle of medicine can scarcely be held to prove that the recipient needs a pension, and Mr. Burt's return does not prove that a single individual has come upon the Poor-Law *for his subsistence*.

The second objection which I take to Mr. Chamberlain's statement is of much more vital importance. He assumes that because at the present time a certain percentage of the labouring classes may be in receipt of parish relief, the same proportion of paupers to the population will necessarily hold good in the future. To assert this is to deny that the diminution in ordinary pauperism which has taken place in the past will continue, and to deny the possibility of improved administration. In those Unions where the administration has been most strict and consistent the decrease has been most marked and most rapid.<sup>1</sup> No one can doubt the truth of this who has studied the history of such Unions as those of Brixworth and of Bradfield in Berkshire. The experience of Bradfield is so material to our question that I venture to quote a few figures relating to that Union. The district is mainly agricultural, and the rate of wages which rules there is low. No great industrial change has taken place there in recent times, and the only exceptional advantage which it has enjoyed has been the presence of certain gentlemen who for twenty years have devoted their time to a careful administration of the Poor-Law. In 1871 the number of persons receiving relief was 1,258; in 1888 it was 192. This

diminution took place in the number of in-door as well as out-door paupers, their numbers falling from 259 to 150. We may add that during the same period the poor-rate fell from 2s. 0½d. in the pound to 5¾d. The reduction of out-relief has been effected gradually, the old recipients being allowed to retain it; and there is therefore reason to hope that in another generation the pauperism will be very much reduced. In 1871 one person in 13 in Bradfield was a pauper; in 1888 it was one in 126. Yet any person visiting Bradfield in 1871 and observing the number of paupers then to be found in the Union would, if he adopted Mr. Chamberlain's method of reasoning, have expected to find in 1888 one person in 13 a pauper. And if on the strength of this inference he had tampered with the administration of the Poor-Law his anticipation would possibly have been justified by the result.

The lesson of the Bradfield Union is repeated wherever the Poor-Law has been carefully administered. In towns, of course, the conditions of life are more complex than in rural Unions, and the task of relating causes and effects to each other is more difficult; but if carefully read the history of such Unions as Whitechapel and St. George's - in - the - East confirms the soundness of the policy pursued at Bradfield.

The new school of reformers have a ready reply to the figures which I have quoted. They do not deny that a strict administration of the Poor-Law results in a reduction of official pauperism, but they assert that the apparent reduction is accompanied by a real increase of distress. The poor hate the workhouse, they say, and prefer starvation to life within its walls, and the refusal of out-relief necessarily leads to great distress. Here I join issue with them. The evidence at our command is clear. Once more the Bradfield Union supplies us with the information which we want. Throughout the whole period of strict administra-

<sup>1</sup> By strict administration is meant the refusal of out-door relief to applicants (not already in receipt of it) except in special cases, and for very limited periods. The main objects of this policy are (1) To render the prospect of parish relief unattractive; (2) To prevent applications from those who are not really destitute. Experience has proved the impossibility, at any rate in towns, of ascertaining an applicant's real sources of income.

tion, side by side with a diminution in the number of paupers there has been a constant improvement in the condition of the independent labourer. This is not merely the statement of such gentlemen as Mr. Bland Garland, who speaks from a long personal experience, but whose judgment might be supposed to be biassed in favour of a policy which he has always strongly advocated. The assertion is borne out by the observation of a large majority of the clergy in the district. If we accept their evidence, and to my mind it is unimpeachable, the labouring classes in the district are generally better housed, better clothed, and more self-respecting than they were when out-relief was given lavishly. They have not starved by its withdrawal. So far from this—to take a definite test of well-being—the membership of sick-clubs has within the period increased 152 per cent., and that of Friendly Societies 148 per cent.

The Poor-Law is sometimes made the subject of attack on the part of well-meaning persons, like the coroner for East London, on the ground that its existence does not prevent the occurrence of cases of actual starvation. It is the unhappy truth that such cases are met with here and there; but the fact which chiefly impresses the student of the annual returns of cases in which a coroner's jury have found a verdict of "Death from Starvation," is that their number is so small in proportion to the population. It is, indeed, because they are so few that each instance attracts, and rightly attracts, so much notice. They would occur under any system. The Poor-Law offers shelter to every destitute person; but we cannot prevent individuals from refusing even in the last resort the conditions under which the relief is necessarily given, any more than we can prevent suicide on the part of those who refuse to accept the conditions of existence under which their lot is cast. Those who perish from want and exposure gene-

rally prove to have been recipients of irregular legal and charitable relief, which has tempted them to refuse until too late the shelter of the workhouse. An impartial consideration of the history of the Poor-Law is bound to lead to the conclusion that on the whole it fairly performs the function which it was intended to fulfil,—the relief of destitution. If it does not offer the pauper an attractive prospect, it was never intended to do so. That the poor should have the means of spending their last years in comfort is as much the desire of such men as Mr. Bland Garland as of the most advanced Socialist; but it is not to State-support that they should look for the means of doing so.

In spite of the evidence to which we have referred there are many who refuse to believe that it is possible for the poorest class, even by the exercise of the sternest thrift, to provide for a prolonged old age, or at any rate to do so except at the sacrifice of all recreation and of everything that makes life worth living. It is useless, we are told, to appeal to the experience of the past. Our forefathers subsisted without pensions, but their maintenance in old age was too often not such as we should now deem satisfactory. Moreover the general standard of living is much higher now than at any previous period, and we cannot expect, nor do we think it desirable, that the working man should, during his years of work, live as his ancestors lived. The report of the Belgian Labour Commission leaves no room for doubt that in Belgium and Holland labourers and artisans of every class live on a much lower scale than those of our own country. They eat less meat, drink less alcohol, live in more crowded rooms, and spend less on dress and recreation. But to live as the foreigner lives would be intolerable to an Englishman, and we cannot expect him to do so. The question we have to answer is this: Can he by reasonable effort and self-denial, without making his working life unbearable, save enough in any



form to make provision for his old age?

The experience of Friendly Societies in the matter of insurance against old age does not at first sight appear encouraging. Wherever they have not been misled by the prospect of help in sickness from the parish or from medical charities, the working-men have formed themselves into Friendly Societies, and have shown that they can with tolerable certainty, provide against distress caused by sickness. In 1890 the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows comprised 673,073 members, and the Ancient Order of Foresters, 623,505. The total of sick-allowance paid by the two Societies in that year amounted to 14,000,000 days, while in 1889 the Hearts of Oak paid 1,300,000 days. Some of the old Trades-Unions have been able to pension members after a certain age, but we do not find that the Friendly Societies are able to deal satisfactorily with the poverty of old age. With the best Friendly Societies sick-pay ceases as a rule at the age of sixty-five; and though some have ventured to start a pension-branch, it has not generally proved very successful. The experiment was tried by the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows, but, after two years four members only had become subscribers to the fund.

Must we from this evidence infer the inability of the poor to insure against old age? A knowledge of their habits and prejudices will, I think, enable us to answer this question in the negative. The deferred annuity is the form of insurance which is least popular among the poor. In the first place, they do not care to invest their money in the purchase of an allowance which they may never live to enjoy; in the second, it is a thoroughly selfish system, and does not directly benefit their families. This dislike of deferred annuities is easily demonstrated. The Post Office offers facilities for the purchase of deferred annuities on equitable terms and with absolute security.

Though these facilities are open to all, and no question can therefore arise of the existence of persons able to insure, in the year 1888 the premium revenue of the Post Office for Life Assurance amounted only to £14,121, and the number of contracts opened in that year was only 580. We are told that the Post Office arrangements are so complicated that they deter the public from availing itself of the benefits offered, but at any rate they do not deter depositors from making very large use of the Savings Bank Department. Again Industrial Assurance Companies offer no facilities to their customers for the purchase of deferred annuities, as they certainly would were there any demand for them.

The ways in which the poor invest their savings are manifold. Often they purchase articles which they can realize in time of want, having enjoyed the use of them meanwhile. If they have enough furniture, they can take a small house and let off one or two furnished rooms; in this way they may sometimes clear the whole of their rent. Working-men earning good wages often become members of building societies, and thus acquire the absolute ownership of the house in which they live. Through the same agencies they have the opportunity of investing small sums at good interest on mortgage. The capital of the registered Building Societies of England and Wales amounted last year to upwards of fifty millions. But of all forms of providence known among the poor, none is more popular than the insurance against death. There is scarcely a village in the country in which the agent of "The Prudential" is unknown. The sum insured in the Industrial Branches of fourteen Insurance Companies on policies for sums not exceeding £50, amounted in 1887 to £83,649,570, the total number of policies being 9,177,661. The work is mainly carried on through the agency of collectors, and the average cost of management

amounted in consequence to 44·38 per cent. of the premium revenue. Though we may deplore the costliness of the system, we must not forget that but for the importunity of the collector the majority of these policies would never have been taken out at all, and much of the money now paid in premiums would have been spent at the public-house. The greater part of the life policies taken out in the Industrial Insurance Companies are, it must be confessed, for very small amounts, such as would seem able to secure no benefit beyond providing a handsome funeral for the deceased and handsome mourning for his immediate relatives. But even insurance of this kind serves a useful purpose. The majority of the poor who live to old age become more or less dependent upon relatives. An aged relative is a more welcome guest for the possession of a life policy, even though it be but for a small sum, and this will often procure his admission to the home of those upon whom he has no legal claim. It will sometimes be found that the policy is taken out in the name of the nephew or niece with whom he goes to reside.

If we cannot safely infer from the apathy of the leading Friendly Societies in the matter of old-age benefits the inability of members to support a pension fund, there are instances which prove that such an inference would be not only unsafe but untrue. To quote once more from a county to whose experience I am already heavily indebted: the Berkshire Friendly Society makes it incumbent upon all members to subscribe either for sick-pay calculated for their whole lives, or for an old-age pension. Though the members are to a great extent agricultural labourers earning low wages, the Society has constantly grown, and is now in a flourishing condition. It is true that some management expenses are saved by the voluntary assistance given by local gentry and farmers, but this can scarcely be held to vitiate the claim that the Society is practically self-sup-

porting. If its success has been due in great part to the good advice which has been available for it, it can hardly be condemned on that account. Indeed, this is just the way in which those who enjoy the advantages of education and leisure can best help the poor. Whether the efforts of those who wish to establish pension funds in connection with all Friendly Societies could with advantage be supplemented by State-assistance is a question which it would be idle to discuss until the leading Societies ask for such assistance. They have hitherto shown little inclination in this direction.

In the preceding pages I have dwelt on the old-age problem as it stands at present. I have endeavoured to show on the one hand, that the attacks which have been made upon the Poor-Law are founded upon misconceptions, and, on the other, that the prospects of the working-man who looks forward to old age are less hopeless than have sometimes been represented. I am now in a position to advert to certain proposals for National Pensions which have been submitted to the public. Of the suggested schemes the most simple and most radical may be taken first.

The provision, at the expense of the State, of a pension of five shillings a week for all persons over sixty-five years of age has been boldly discussed by Mr. Charles Booth, who was recently described by Mr. Chamberlain as the greatest living authority on pauperism; though he has, I believe, no practical experience of Poor-Law administration. It is evident that Mr. Booth is favourably inclined towards the scheme; and he seems to regard it as impracticable at present only because the taxpayer of England and Wales is not yet likely to be willing to pay the £17,000,000 a year (or eightpence in the pound Income Tax) which would be required. He argues that the bulk of the aged poor would be able to live in fair comfort with this allowance as a nucleus, supplemented by their other resources. The

workhouse would still exist for those very helpless or very reckless persons who could not find a home outside, and their pensions would be drawn by the guardians.

Mr. Booth has, in our opinion, seriously underrated the difficulties and dangers which would attend the carrying out of this scheme. No careful estimate of the real cost has been attempted. The £17,000,000 does not cover management expenses, and these would be enormous. The Poor-Law guardians, for all their decentralised machinery, cannot protect themselves against imposture, and the authorities entrusted with the administration of the scheme would find it in practice no easy task to guard against applicants understating their ages, and to prevent the families of deceased pensioners from continuing to draw their allowances. It would be impossible to foretell what economic difficulties would not arise in the working of the experiment. Take one example. Many men at sixty-five are still able to work. Now, the experience of the old Poor-Law has shown conclusively that the effect of an allowance in aid of wages results in their reduction. Wherever out-relief is given we find that persons in regular receipt of it are willing, because they are able, to secure employment by working at less than a subsistence wage. Complaints have even been made in certain quarters that army-pensioners obtain employment in preference to other labourers because they are in a position to take lower wages. May we not naturally fear that under the proposed system pensioners would undersell their labour, and drive out of employment their juniors of the age of, say, sixty to sixty-five? This lowering of the age of superannuation should logically be followed by a reduction of the pension age to sixty—it is estimated that this would double the cost—and the process would repeat itself indefinitely. The main argument used for making the pensions payable to all, rich as well as poor, is that by this means the

idea of disgrace could be banished from the receipt of public assistance. Is not the price a rather heavy one to pay for the privilege of seeing the poor pocket an allowance paid for by others with as much complacency as they receive their own wages?

Where, however, Mr. Booth seems to me most mistaken is in the view which he takes of the probable effect of the measure upon thrift generally. Will, he asks, the assurance of five shillings a week after sixty-five make those who can lay by at all less anxious, on the whole, to do so? This question has been answered in the negative by the Fabian Society, and Mr. Booth adopts their arguments. At present, we are told, the poor cannot save enough to provide a satisfactory maintenance in old age. They must have recourse to the Poor-Law in any case, and their savings would only go in relief of the rates; therefore they make no attempt to save at all. If, however, bare subsistence in old age were assured them, the certainty of reaping the benefit of their savings would stimulate to providence. No figures can help us to test the force of this contention. We must, each of us for ourselves, form an opinion in the light of our knowledge of human nature. As we have seen above, the workhouse is not, even for the poorest, the certainty which the Fabian Society contends. Thrift does for the most part secure its due reward, and the poor have at present the strongest possible incentive for saving. What are the motives which practically determine conduct? One need not be an Utilitarian to see that there is a constant struggle between the desire of present comfort or pleasure on the one hand, and the fear of want or discomfort in the future on the other. Even under the present conditions too many of the poor find the desire of present gratification irresistible. Is the motive likely to prove less powerful when the force set against it is no longer the fear of the workhouse, but the possibility of having to do without

additional comforts after sixty-five? What attraction will deferred luxury have for the drunkard and the idler? In France, where the peasant has not so certain an asylum as the workhouse to look forward to, he is led by the fear of destitution to habits of thrift unknown in this country.

There is another aspect of the question. Even in our present civilisation the unit is not the individual but the family. Within the circle of the family we are for the most part Socialists. The father works for the good of all, and the mother's motives are not individualistic; even brothers and sisters do not always insist on their legal rights among themselves. We are all dependent upon our parents in childhood. The majority of us—for the poor are a majority—if we live long enough, become wholly or partially dependent upon our children, or other members of our family, in our later years. Does not this fact afford the real explanation of many of the difficulties which puzzle the statistician? Numbers of the poor are apparently unable to save against old age. Yet official returns show that they die neither in the workhouse nor from starvation. The simple truth is that old people are supported by their children or other relatives. In such assistance there is no degradation. The benefits are received in return for similar kindnesses bestowed by the recipients in former years, and are given in unconscious anticipation of similar benefits to be received in their turn by the donors. One of the most potent forms of thrift on the part of parents is the education of children in such a way that they will, in years to come, recognise their filial obligations. Is not this a better Socialism than that which, while it assumes altruism on the part of every member of a community, would loosen parental ties and foster within the family a selfish individualism? This consideration has special force with regard to the position of women. They are naturally more dependent than men upon their

families, and they would be most affected by any measure which undermined the recognition of family obligations.

Of the many proposals which are in the air for the supplementation by the State of voluntary insurance, the most definite is that of the National Providence League. Its essential provision is that every person who has secured from his own payments a pension of two shillings and sixpence a week shall have the right to claim from the State an additional weekly allowance of two shillings and sixpence at the age of sixty-five. He is also to be allowed to receive any Poor-Law relief which may be necessary at any preceding period in the form of out-relief. This proposal would doubtless be a far less dangerous experiment than that which we have already discussed. Some of the objections to the latter would, however, apply to it, though in a less degree. And we must not flatter ourselves that the measure would do much towards the abolition of pauperism. The case of the drunkard and of the spendthrift would be left untouched, and though in a matter of this kind accurate statistics are not to be obtained, we may note that careful persons like Mr. McDougall, of Manchester, who have investigated the sources of pauperism, attribute 51 per cent. of its numbers to drunkenness alone.

In view of these considerations and of the great burden which the proposed experiment would impose on the unfortunate ratepayers, I cannot think that we should be well advised to adopt a scheme which would in effect offer an enormous premium to one particular form of thrift, and that one which, as we have seen, is the least acceptable to the taste and feelings of the community, and which would risk injuring by unfair competition the development of those natural agencies which already possess the confidence of the working-classes.

The proposal of the Poor Law Reform Association to combine the pro-



vision of the free pension with supplementation from public funds, to the extent of 20 per cent. of any deferred annuity not exceeding £10 a year provided by insurance, seems to me to unite the defects of the two schemes which we have discussed.

If State-aided insurance must fail in inducing the improvident to take thought for their old age, the idea naturally occurs: Why not make insurance compulsory? This course has been advocated for years by Canon Blackley. The reply to the suggestion is simple. We are not at present sufficiently advanced in Socialism to submit to such compulsion. The experiment is being tried in Germany, where workmen are forced to find about one-third of the cost of insuring for themselves a small superannuation allowance. There even, if we are not misinformed, it is only in the case of men in constant and regular employment that the collection of premiums is at all satisfactory. With us the difficulty would be greater still. The casual labourer, the man in irregular employment—the class from which the aged pauper is chiefly drawn—is just the person who would escape payment, and be left in the end without a pension. Moreover, the cry would soon be raised that it is a cruel thing to exact insurance money from a man who scarcely earns enough to keep his family in the bare necessities of life. We should witness a repetition of the process which has been observed in the history of elementary education. Just as State-assistance was followed by compulsion, and compulsory attendance at school led to free education, so compulsory insurance would very possibly result in free pensions. The arguments which brought about the abolition of school-fees would be applied with equal force to the new question, and our democracy would be easily convinced that if the poor were compelled to pay for benefits which they might never live to enjoy, the State was bound, in common justice, to provide the premiums.

If none of the pension-schemes which have been proposed can safely be adopted, are we to be content with a policy of sitting still? If we cannot by a stroke of the pen, or by an enactment of the legislature, emancipate the poor, can the rich do nothing to assist them to work out their own salvation? Let me indicate a few directions which it seems to me that the efforts of those who seek to promote the welfare of the poor might take. The process of depauperisation which is going on in Unions like Brixworth and Bradfield can become general throughout the country only by the constant efforts of disinterested and intelligent guardians, and no man need consider the work of Poor-Law administration unworthy of his devotion. The promotion of Friendly and Co-operative Societies is another task calling for the assistance of men of education and leisure. In rural districts especially a sound Friendly Society can hardly be floated and steered into success without wider knowledge than the labourer possesses. Again, it would be impossible to enumerate all the various ways in which the poor can be instructed in the means of effecting household economy and avoiding waste. Further, a preacher who would convince them that unduly early marriage is a crime, and that parents who bring into the world more children than they can properly maintain, have none to blame but themselves, would be one of the greatest benefactors of the age.

Again, while we must never sacrifice the interests of the community to those of the pauper, it is possible, even under the present system, to do much towards making his lot tolerable. In recent years much improvement has been effected in workhouses, but in many parts of the country much still remains to be done. The changes which seem to me to be most desirable are in the direction of better classification and of providing suitable occupation. Elaborate classification no doubt entails much expense, but



money can scarcely be better spent than in insuring that comparatively respectable people are not compelled to associate with the depraved. Want of employment, again, is probably the cause of much of the dreariness which strikes the visitor in the workhouse. Why should not old people be encouraged to occupy their time in work as nearly as possible like that to which they have been accustomed? Any reform of this kind makes life in the workhouse happier without making it in any way more attractive in anticipation.

Hitherto I have made no mention of private charity. Its bearing upon the question under discussion is, however, too important to be left unmentioned. Thrift and industry do as a rule meet with their reward. There are, however, cases in which owing to exceptional misfortunes the most provident and the most energetic are finally left destitute. It is the duty of private charity to deal with these. The cases are not so numerous as might be supposed, and private charity, if properly organised and not wasted on the wrong objects, is for the most part competent for the task; though, from time to time, sensational appeals on behalf of striking schemes divert the stream of contributions, and the poor suffer in consequence. It is true that such charities as the Tower Hamlets Pension Committee, which was founded to provide adequate pensions for the class of case indicated in certain districts of London where out-relief is practically abolished, have great difficulty in obtaining the support they deserve; but the best managed committees of the Charity Organisation Society, who have on principle fixed the standard of eligibility very high, claim that they have never failed to procure from some source the means of supplying a pension in any case resident within their respective districts, which it has

seemed to them desirable to recommend to the charity of strangers.<sup>1</sup>

There are, no doubt, many districts in which the local sources of charity stand in need of much organisation before they can be regarded as competent to furnish a pension to every suitable applicant. But no public machinery would possess the necessary discrimination or elasticity for dealing with the intricacies of delicate case-work, and it is to voluntary effort rather than to legislation that we should look for the solution of the problem.

The principles which underlie my main contention are not new. They were learnt in the early part of this century, at the cost of bitter experience, by the classes who then ruled the country. Most educated men have been able to profit by the lessons which their fathers have been able to teach them, and the history of the Poor-Law is open to all who care to read it. Now, however, we are governed by a democracy, and democracies prefer to-night's evening paper to ancient history. It may be that the masses will have to learn by personal experience the truths which, if they were wise, they might accept at second-hand. Unfortunately there will always be leaders ready to encourage them in their unwisdom. The potential pauper does not like the workhouse, and his vote cannot be despised. In the exigencies of party strife there is no danger into which politicians will not be found to rush; but the thoughtful man who is not seeking popularity will prefer to be "on the side of the angels."

<sup>1</sup> The Charity Organisation Society has thought right, as a rule, to appeal to strangers for help to provide pensions only in cases where these two conditions are satisfied: (1) That the applicant has made the best use of his opportunities for provision against old age; (2) That the relatives, if any, upon whom the applicant has a legal or strong moral claim for support are doing their best to help.

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MARCH, 1892

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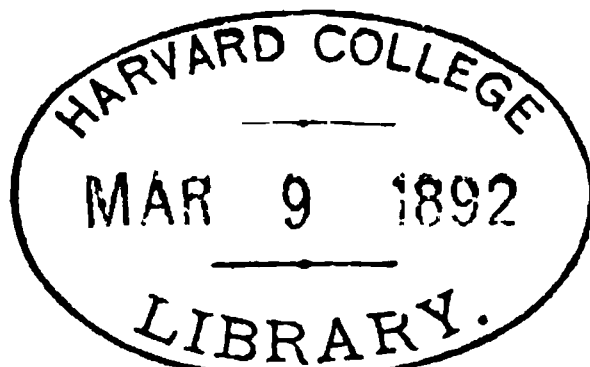
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## FINLAND.

At this moment the most interesting political study in Europe is the Grand Duchy of Finland. Its past political history and its present political state are among the most remarkable that either past or present supplies. A land has been twice conquered, and each time it has gained by its conquest. Its last conqueror boasted, and boasted with truth, that his conquest had caused a new free people to take its place among the nations. For, in becoming part of the dominions of that foreign conqueror, the land kept its ancient laws and political rights, and received a more distinct political being than it had possessed before. Subject to a sovereign who rules his other dominions with unrestrained power, it still keeps its ancient constitution, a constitution of a type of which it is the only surviving example. The free state, united to the despotism, has rather advanced than gone back in the path of freedom. Finland is all this, and it is more. It is the land which, more than any other, throws light on our own controversies of the moment. The name of Finland has been constantly brought by way of example into late discussions on the question of Irish Home Rule. And it is almost the only land, outside the dominions of our own sovereign, which has been brought into such discussions with any measure of reason. Talk, on either side, about Hungary and Austria, about Sweden and Norway, about states where the bond of union has taken a federal shape, has been

wholly out of place; it could prove nothing either way. But talk about Russia and Finland has not been out of place; if quoting of examples can prove anything in such matters, Finland is the example which is likely to prove most. But we cannot get the full measure of the teaching of that example unless we contrast it with another example. Within a few years two States were added to the dominions of the same despotic sovereign, not quite on the same terms, but on terms so nearly the same that both may be fairly called constitutional States, so nearly the same that the relation of each to the other dominions of the common sovereign might fairly be called a relation of Home Rule. In 1809 the Emperor of all the Russias became constitutional Grand Duke of Finland. In 1814-15 he became constitutional King of Poland. Constitutional Grand Duke of Finland his successor remains, ruling over a free and loyal people, who ask for nothing but to be left to enjoy the rights and laws which his predecessor confirmed to them. That there is no longer a constitutional King of Poland no man needs to be told. That is to say, of two like political experiments tried within a few years of each other, one has wonderfully succeeded, the other has lamentably failed. The causes of success and of failure may form a deep study for the political historian. As for the present controversy among ourselves, the contrast may teach something to both sides. If any man is unwise enough to fancy that Home Rule is a

remedy for all things, that it is a relation likely to succeed in any time and any place, let him learn better by looking at the sad failure of Home Rule in Poland. But if any man is unwise enough to fancy that Home Rule is some theoretical device which was never tried before, and which, if tried, is in its own nature destined to failure, let him learn better by looking at the wonderful success of Home Rule in Finland, a success on which assuredly the wisest statesman could not have reckoned beforehand.

The Finnish people, the people who have given their name to Finland, claim at starting an unique interest as the only branch of one of the primitive stocks of Europe which has reached to any measure of civilization and historic importance on its own soil. We need not dispute whether the two præ-Aryan stocks at two ends of Europe, that which is represented by the Fins and that which is represented by the Basques, have any connexion with one another. It is enough for our purpose that the Finnish race, once so widely spread, has in some parts given way to Aryan settlement, that in others it has made its way by conquest into lands already Aryan, while in one land it has stayed at home and grown its own growth, under Aryan rule certainly, but under a rule which did not carry with it either displacement, bondage, or assimilation. In the Magyar kingdom the Fin, still speaking his Finnish tongue, bears rule over Aryan subjects. In the Bulgarian lands, delivered and yet to be delivered, he has, as far as speech goes, been assimilated by Aryan subjects and neighbours. But he still keeps something which distinguishes him from other speakers of the kindred Slavonic tongues. In the Baltic provinces of Russia he still lives on through conquest after conquest, along with masters who have become sharers in his bondage. But on the northern side of their own gulf a Finnish people still abide on their own soil, still keeping their national speech and

national life, a speech and life which have also endured through two conquests, but conquests each of which has served to raise the conquered to the level, or above the level, of their conquerors. Conquest by Sweden brought Finland within the pale of the religion and civilization of Europe. Conquest by Russia gave the Finnish people a distinct national being; inseparable union with the dominions of a despotic ruler has to them meant a step in the path of freedom, a nearer approach than before to the full independence of a nation.

The union of Finland with the Swedish rule on the other side of the Baltic was one of a class of enterprises in which the history of Northern Europe is rich. If we are uncharitably given, we may say that greed of territorial dominion cloaked itself under the garb of religious zeal; but we shall show better understanding of the spirit of the time, if we say that ambition, love of adventure, and a genuine zeal for religious conversion, all walked side by side, and were often united in the same person. In the latter half of the twelfth century the combined work of conquest and conversion began with the Swedish King Eric, who bears the title of the Saint. Such an enterprise passed in those days for a crusade, and the Swedish crusades in Finland at least bore better fruits than the German crusades in the Wendish and Prussian and southern Finnish lands. The land became part of the Swedish dominion; the law and the creed of Sweden became the law and the creed of Finland; Swedish colonists largely settled in the country; but the older people were neither displaced, enslaved, nor assimilated. The Fin, speaking his Finnish tongue, was a subject of the Swedish king, a member of the Swedish kingdom, on the same terms as his Swedish fellow-subject. He shared, for good and for evil, the destinies of the State of which he had become part. He had his one neighbour and enemy, as the parts of the kingdom on the other side of the

Northern Mediterranean had theirs. Russian warfare, Russian invasion, have been familiar things in Finnish history from the thirteenth century to the nineteenth. While the Swede advanced from the coast, the Russian advanced from his inland frontier. That frontier has shifted to and fro, as the result of many wars and many treaties. And as the faith of the Old Rome advanced along with the march of the Swede, the faith of the New Rome advanced no less along with the march of the Russian.

But Finland, as an integral part of the Swedish kingdom, shared in its religious, no less than in its political revolutions. Fins and Swedes equally accepted the Lutheran Reformation. And to this day the Lutheran creed is the creed of the vast majority of the inhabitants of Finland; the Orthodox faith is professed only in some districts bordering on Russia, and which have been, at one time or another, under Russian dominion. And we must remember that in Sweden, as in England, the religious change did not involve anything like the same break with the traditions of the past which it involved in most continental countries. The hierarchy went on, and kept its old political place. The ancient constitution of Sweden, changed in modern times in Sweden itself, lives on in Finland. The four Houses of the Diet, Nobles, Clergy, Burghers, and Peasants, still come together under a Grand Duke who is also Emperor of all the Russias, as they once did under the King of the Goths and Vandals. The keeping of this ancient constitution, a native and unique growth of the joint Swedish and Finnish soil, would alone make Finland one of the most interesting political studies in Europe. There is nothing like it now elsewhere. Most lands had three Estates; England was meant to have them as well as others. But, as compared with most continental constitutions, it is the special glory of Sweden and Finland to have had something so specially its own as the House

of Peasants. The position of the nobles was a privileged and a powerful one; in particular times and places it might even be an oppressive one; but the mass of the people of Sweden and Finland were never serfs or villains.

The course of events which led to the present state of things, the change of Finland from an integral part of the Swedish kingdom to a separate state inseparably united with the Russian empire under a common sovereign, may be said to have directly begun in the central years of the eighteenth century. But certain tendencies, not indeed to union with Russia, but to a feeling of separate being as distinct from Sweden, are older. The very wars with Russia helped to strengthen it. The geographical position of the country, the exposed neighbour of Russia, while Sweden was the neighbour of Norway and Denmark, often caused the defence of Finland to be largely left to its own people. The introduction of the style of Grand Duchy, the position of the Grand Duchy of Finland as the appanage of a Swedish prince, might also suggest some measure of distinction between the lands east and west of the northern gulf. Still Finland remained a part of the Swedish kingdom. The Grand Duchy shared in all the revolutions of the kingdom, alike in those which set up the nobles at the expense of the King and in those which set up the King at the expense of the nobles. And in such revolutions, if some discontented grandes cast their eyes another way, the heart of the Finnish people was ever with their King.

In later, no less than in earlier times, Finland was naturally the scene of every war between Sweden and Russia. And we may say that any ruler of Russia must have been endowed with more than human virtue if he did not wish to get possession both of Finland and of the lands specially known as the Baltic provinces. When the only Russian outlet was at Archangel, the yearning must have been strong indeed

to find a path to the more inviting sea that lay so near. And when the Russian capital had been placed so near to the Finnish frontier, a capital planted on ground actually won from Sweden, the yearning must have become yet stronger. Russia was, as far as geography goes, like Poland cut off from the sea by Prussia, like France, in an earlier day, cut off from the sea by Normandy. No wonder then that, in all times, and in the eighteenth century above all earlier times, Finland was ever a main object of Russian warfare and Russian policy. The wars of Charles the Twelfth, ended after his death by the peace of Nystad in 1721, led to a Russian occupation of Finland and to the cession of a piece of Finnish territory. The war of 1741-43 led to another occupation and another cession; the Russian frontier again advanced. But this invasion was distinguished from earlier ones by the very significant fact that the Empress Elizabeth caused the inhabitants of the occupied country to swear allegiance to herself. But it does not appear that the loyalty of any part of the Finnish people to the Swedish crown was ever seriously disturbed till the changes of 1772, when Gustavus the Third restored the royal authority at the cost of the nobles. The general loyalty of the people was not disturbed then; but some of the discontented nobles began to hope to better themselves by making Finland a separate State, an aristocratic State, under Russian protection. In the next war, waged by Gustavus the Fourth in 1788-90, this party did not scruple to enter into direct intrigues with the Empress Catharine. But the mass of the people clung to their King, and this time the war was ended without any further cession of territory.

The fruits of all these movements came, though in a much better form than could have been looked for, in the early years of our own century. In the next war, the invasion by the Tzar Alexander the First in 1808 led to the complete separation of Finland

and the other Swedish lands east of the gulf of Bothnia from the Swedish crown. Finland was conquered and annexed by the conqueror; but it was annexed after a fashion in which one may suppose that no other conquered land ever was annexed. In fact one may doubt whether "annexed" is the right word. Since 1809 the crowns of Russia and Finland are necessarily worn by the same person; the Russian and the Finnish nation have necessarily the same sovereign. But Finland is not incorporated with Russia; in everything but the common sovereign Russia and Finland are countries foreign to one another. And when we speak of the crown and the nation of Finland, we speak of a crown and a nation which were called into being by the will of the conqueror himself. The first act of Alexander, in June 1808, while the war was still going on, was to call on the four Estates of Finland to send deputies to Saint-Petersburg to confer with him on the affairs of the Grand Duchy. Their advice was to recommend the summoning of a formal Diet of the Grand Duchy within the country itself. So the Tzar did in March 1809. One may call it a formal Diet; but one cannot call it a regular Diet. A Diet of the Grand Duchy of Finland, apart from the Diet of the Kingdom of Sweden, was something wholly new. The conqueror had possession of part of the Swedish dominions, and he called on the people of that part to meet him in a separate Parliament, but one chosen in exactly the same way as the existing law prescribed for the common Parliament of the whole. The representatives of the Four Estates of the conquered lands, instead of going to meet their former sovereign and the representatives of the rest of his dominions, came together by themselves on their own soil to meet the new sovereign whom the chances of war had given them. In his new character of Grand Duke of Finland, the Tzar Alexander came to Borgå, and there on March 27th, 1809, fully

confirmed the existing constitution, laws, and religion, of his new State. The position of that State is best described in his own words. Speaking neither Swedish nor Finnish, and speaking to hearers who understood no Russian, the new Grand Duke used the French tongue. Finland was "*Placé désormais au rang des nations*;" it was a "*Nation, tranquille au dehors, libre dans l'intérieur*." And it was a nation of his own founding. The people of Finland had ceased to be part of the Swedish nation; they had not become part of the Russian nation; they had become a nation by themselves.

All this, be it remembered, happened before the formal cession of the lost lands by Sweden to Russia. This was not made till the Peace of Frederikshamn on September 17th of the same year. The treaty contained no stipulation for the political rights of Finland; their full confirmation by the new sovereign was held to be enough. Two years later, in 1811, the boundary of the new State was enlarged. Alexander, Emperor of all the Russias and Grand Duke of Finland, cut off from his empire, and added to his grand duchy, the Finnish districts which had been ceded by Sweden to Russia sixty years before. The boundary of his constitutional grand duchy was brought very near indeed to the capital of his despotic empire.

I have called the relation of Finland to Russia a relation of Home Rule, and so it is practically. Home Rule is the relation of a dependency, of a State which has a separate constitution in all internal matters, but which has all external matters settled for it by another power. This is practically the position of Finland. Formally we might say that it has a higher position. Russia and Finland, with their sovereign necessarily the same, but otherwise separate States, might seem to be formally in the same relation as Sweden and Norway, as Hungary and Austria, as Great

Britain and Ireland from 1782 to 1800. But practically Finland is a dependency of Russia. She was made to feel the fact somewhat sharply some six or seven and thirty years back, when it was thought a noble exploit of the British arms to work havoc on the shores of Finland, in order, we were told, to prolong the Turk's power of oppression at the other end of Europe. Truly the Fins must have learned by that hard teaching, that, though their duchy was with good reason called a nation by the prince who made it such, yet it is not a nation in any international sense. When the fruits of the earth were given to the flames on the shores of the gulf of Bothnia in order that the barbarian might more easily work his evil will on the shores of the Bosporos, the men of Finland must have felt of a truth that their crown and the crown of Russia are inseparable. It did not occur to the destroyers to make the distinction which they might possibly have thought it politic to make in the case of Hungary or Norway. That the position of Finland, formally the same, is practically different from that of the last two named lands is shown by the ordinary forms of diplomacy. There are Austro-Hungarian embassies all about; there is no Russo-Finnish embassy.

It must not be forgotten that Alexander, despotic Emperor and constitutional Grand Duke, tried the same experiment again a few years later, when he took on him a third character as constitutional King of Poland. But it has been said already that the experiment which succeeded in Finland failed in Poland. We may fairly say that it succeeded in Finland, though the full accomplishment of the promises of the first sovereign Grand Duke had to wait till the days of the third. It is strange that Alexander never held another diet of Finland after the first when he took possession. After such a precedent, Nicolas was not likely to go beyond his brother in the constitutional path. But the land



was neither neglected nor oppressed. Finland had no such grounds of revolt as Poland had. And with the illustrious son of Nicolas came a brighter day. Alexander the Second, the prince who broke the bonds of the serf in his own land and who gave a national being to enslaved Bulgaria, did something for Finland also. Since 1863 Diets have been regularly held, and the year 1869 saw somewhat of a Finnish Reform Bill. It cannot be denied that the old constitution of the Four Houses, while the most precious of specimens as a political study, is a somewhat antiquated and clumsy machine for practical use. Under the Swedish constitution which lived on unaltered in Finland, large classes of the nation found no representation in any House of the Diet. This is the tendency of a system of Estates. Classes of men will arise, who have the same interest in the country and the same capacity for serving it with any of the represented classes, but whom the system of representation shuts out. There were men in Finland, as in Sweden, who did not rank under any of the heads of Nobles, Clergy, Burghers, or Peasants. An Englishman is perhaps most struck with the strange position of all members of noble families save one at a time. The head of each noble house can either take his seat in the House of Nobles himself or send some other member of his family to represent him there. The rest of the kin were till 1869 utterly disfranchised. Their share in the House of Nobles was held by another; nor could they find a place among Clergy, Burghers, or Peasants. Again, the House of Burghers was narrowly confined to members of incorporated guilds, shutting out of course many of the most intelligent inhabitants of the towns. There were landowners too, who, as not coming under the head of either Nobles or Peasants, were equally disfranchised. Something was done in 1869 to make things a little wider. The franchise for the House of Burghers was largely extended, so as

to take in all tax-paying inhabitants of the towns who are not nobles or clergy. The Peasant House now takes in all landowners who are not nobles, clergy, or government officials—who are altogether shut out from the Diet—and the tenants of crown lands. The House of Clergy takes in some representatives of the University of Helsingfors and of the public schools, who may of course be laymen. And the utter disfranchisement of the great mass of the descendants of noble families is slightly relieved by allowing them, if qualified, to elect and be elected to the House of Clergy, but not to those of Burghers or Peasants. Thus those in Finland who may answer to North and Pitt and Fox, to Althorp and Stanley, to Lord John Russell and the new Duke of Devonshire, could have found their way into Parliament only in a clerical or academical guise, unless the several peers to whose families they belonged had chosen to send them to the House of Lords instead of themselves.

Many patriotic men in Finland abstractedly wish this system to be changed. They would in theory like to make the same change which has been made in Sweden, to have two Houses after the pattern of most other nations. But they do not want to touch anything just now. Who was it who had written on his tomb, "I was well; but, trying to be better, I am here"? That is the present feeling of Finland. Some things might conceivably be made better; but the fear is that, if anything is touched, it will be made, not better but worse. Finland is not a land of political parties. Such division as there is in the country turns, as it is sure to turn wherever the materials for the controversy exist, on difference of language. Swedish is naturally the most cultivated language, the one which naturally claims a precedence to itself. But, just as with Czech in Bohemia, with Flemish in Belgium, Finnish, the truer language of the country, is looking up. Both are recognized as

official languages; and the thought comes in whether, in such a state of things, there are not some advantages about a sovereign who does not belong to either. But the really wonderful thing is, not that Swedes and Fins have sometimes found matter for dispute, but that they have on the whole agreed so well as they have. But in Finland Swedes and Fins, though they may have their disputes on smaller matters, are united in a common purpose to defend the rights of their common country. Are those rights threatened? It is perhaps too soon to speak with certainty either way. But it is certain that a feeling of coming danger has long been spreading over the country. The present Tzar and Grand Duke has held the diets of his Grand Duchy regularly, even more frequently than his father. But he will not go on doing so if he listens to the clamours of a large part of his Russian subjects. A dead set seems to be making by a large part of the Russian Press against the chartered liberties of Finland. One would have thought that, with Finland before his eyes, the first thought in the mind of a patriotic Russian would be to aim at levelling up, not at levelling down. It would surely be a nobler work to make Russia as Finland than to make Finland as Russia. It is widely believed that that was the mind of Alexander the Second, that he who had so carefully restored the rights of his lesser dominion was, when both his dominions lost him, pondering how to extend equal rights to the greater. But with large classes at least in Russia it seems to be thought patriotic to assert the unity of the empire, and to speak of the liberties of Finland as a blot on the face of that unity. It is argued that, when Alexander the First with his own mouth proclaimed that the people of Finland were a free nation, he did not know what he was saying. All that he meant was that he was enlarging his empire by a new province, to which of his

grace he granted some privileges which he or his successors might at any moment take away. Of his own grace it certainly was that Alexander the First used the rights of conquest as no other conqueror before him ever used them. But it is a strange argument to infer that because a thing was graciously given, it may, without breach of faith, without scorn of a monarch's kingly word, be ungraciously taken back again.

Besides this generally threatening temper in Russia, the immediate ground of dread is the appointment of a commission, Russian and Finnish, to codify the fundamental laws of Finland. Patriotic Finlanders, Swedish and Finnish, say that it is better to let well alone. They do not know what "codification" may mean, and whatever it means, they had rather not have it just now. It is not a moment for reform, when things look so much as if reform might haply turn to destruction. The belief in Finland is that reform, that "codification," in the eyes of some who have power and influence, means nothing short of the overthrow of the liberties of the Grand Duchy, the liberties which the first Alexander preserved in the moment of conquest, and to which his successors, peacefully succeeding, have each one plighted his kingly word. Rumour points to projected changes of no small moment. If some schemes that are believed to be under discussion are carried out, the political and religious independence, the very national being, of the Finnish nation is to be blotted out. The national Church, secured by the plighted word of the first conqueror, is to sink to the position of a tolerated sect, while the Orthodox creed—to Russia a cherished badge of national life, to Finland the very opposite—is to be set in its place as the established religion of the Grand Duchy as well as of the empire. Offices in Finland are, it is said, to be opened to all subjects of the Russian crown, including men to whom both the languages of

Finland may be unknown. And, though the Diet may still possibly be allowed to meet, yet it is believed that a change is coming by which the Grand Duke may, if he think good, legislate in Finland, as in Russia, of his own will, whether the Estates of the Duchy consent or no. A writer in another land, who has no means of prying into the secrets of princes and their advisers, can put forth such statements as these only as rumours. He may hope that no such purposes are really entertained; he may hope that, if they are entertained, something may still step in to thwart them. He can only say that changes of this kind are believed to be threatening. For himself he can go no farther than to say that things can hardly be in a wholesome state, that there can hardly be that confidence which there ought to be between prince and people, that confidence which not many years back there undoubtedly was, when rumours of purposes like these can so much as be believed.

Grievous indeed it would be if the cherished rights of this interesting corner of Europe, so rich in memories of early days and early races, should be swept away out of mere caprice. It was sad when the last trace of the liberties of Poland was blotted out; but Poland had at least twice revolted; even from Alexander the Second we could not look for a virtue so superhuman that no king or commonwealth ever practised it, the virtue of letting a people go, simply because they wish to be let go. But all that Alexander the Third is called on to do is simply to do nothing, to leave alone the good work which Alexander the First began and which Alexander the Second carried to perfection. Well may the world weep, well may Russia and Finland weep, for the day when the murderer's hand cut short the high career of the Deliverer. Had he lived, we should not have seen Bulgaria driven to see friends in the Turk and the Austrian rather than in the son and the people of him who set her free.

Had he lived, there would have been no fear of Finland being dragged down to the level of Russia; there might have been a hope of Russia being lifted up to the level of Finland. The prospect is gloomy, gloomiest of all is it for those who wished the father God speed on every step of his path of glory, and who mourn the more that they have to look out with fear and trembling for every coming step in the path of the son. It would be grievous if the cause of Finnish freedom should be turned to the base purposes of the vulgar slanderers of Russia, of those who seem to take a fiend's delight in stirring up strife between the two powers who are called above all others to the deliverance of the South-eastern lands. It is for them to speak to whom Russia, her people and her rulers, are simply like the people and the rulers of any other nation; it is for them who can, in the case of Russia as in any other case, applaud wise and righteous dealing and condemn dealing which is unwise and unrighteous. In the great meeting of December 1876, the meeting which saved us from a war yet more needless and unrighteous than that of 1854, no name drew forth louder cheers than every mention of Russia, her people and her prince. And those cheers were well deserved. Those who raised them then, who would raise them again in the like case, would hardly raise them now, when they look to the past and the present of Bulgaria, to the future that may be of Finland. Still the blow has not fallen; there is still hope that it may not fall. What Bohemia has been robbed of, what Ireland yearns for, Finland still keeps. The third Alexander has still time to turn about and walk in the steps of the first and of the second. Let him school himself to do the deeds of his father, and the blessings that waited on his father will wait on him.

EDWARD A. FREEMAN.

DON ORSINO.<sup>1</sup>

BY F. MARION CRAWFORD.

## CHAPTER VII.

'THE Princess Sant' Ilario's early life had been deeply stirred by the great makers of human character, sorrow and happiness. She had suffered profoundly, she had borne her trials with a rare courage, and her reward, if one may call it so, had been very great. She had seen the world and known it well, and the knowledge had not been forgotten in the peaceful prosperity of later years. Gifted with a beauty not equalled, perhaps, in those times, endowed with a strong and passionate nature under a singularly cold and calm outward manner, she had been saved from many dangers by the rarest of commonplace qualities, common sense. She had never passed for an intellectual person, she had never been very brilliant in conversation, she had even been thought old-fashioned in her prejudices concerning the books she read. But her judgment had rarely failed her at critical moments. Once only she remembered having committed a great mistake, of which the sudden and unexpected consequences had almost wrecked her life. But in that case she had suffered her heart to lead her, an innocent girl's good name had been at stake, and she had rashly taken a responsibility too heavy for love itself to bear. Those days were long past now; twenty years separated Corona, the mother of four tall sons, from the Corona who had risked all to save poor little Flavia Montevarchi.

But even she knew that a state of such perpetual and unclouded happiness could hardly last a lifetime, and she had forced herself, almost laughing

at the thought, to look forward to the day when Orsino must cease to be a boy and must face the world of strong loves and hates through which most men have to pass, and which all men must have known in order to be men indeed.

The people whose lives are full of the most romantic incidents, are not generally, I think, people of romantic disposition. Romance, like power, will come uncalled for, and those who seek it most, are often those who find it least. And the reason is simple enough. The man of heart is not perpetually burrowing in his surroundings for affections upon which his heart may feed, any more than the very strong man is naturally impelled to lift every weight he sees or to fight with every man he meets. The persons whom others call romantic are rarely conscious of being so. They are generally far too much occupied with the one great thought which makes their strongest, bravest, and meanest actions seem perfectly commonplace to themselves. Corona Del Carmine, who had heroically sacrificed herself in her earliest girlhood to save her father from ruin, and who a few years later had risked a priceless happiness to shield a foolish girl, had not in her whole life been conscious of a single romantic instinct. Brave, devoted, but unimaginative by nature, she had followed her heart's direction in most worldly matters.

She was amazed to find that she was becoming romantic now, in her dreams for Orsino's future. All sorts of ideas which she would have laughed at in her own youth flitted through her brain from morning till night.

<sup>1</sup> Copyright 1891, by Macmillan and Co.

Her fancy built up a life for her eldest son, which she knew to be far from the possibility of realisation, but which had for her a new and strange attraction.

She planned for him the most unimaginable happiness, of a kind which would perhaps have hardly satisfied his more modern instincts. She saw a maiden of indescribable beauty, brought up in unapproachable perfections, guarded by the all but insuperable jealousy of an ideal home. Orsino was to love this vision, and none other, from the first meeting to the term of his natural life, and was to win her in the face of difficulties such as would have made even Giovanni, the incomparable, look grave. This radiant creature was also to love Orsino, as a matter of course, with a love vastly more angelic than human, but not hastily nor thoughtlessly, lest Orsino should get her too easily and not value her as he ought. Then she saw the two betrothed, side by side on shady lawns and moonlit terraces, in a perfectly beautiful intimacy such as they would certainly never enjoy in the existing conditions of their own society. But that mattered little. The wooing, the winning, and the marrying of the exquisite girl were to make up Orsino's life, and fifty or sixty years of idyllic happiness were to be the reward of their mutual devotion. Had she not spent twenty such years herself? Then why should not all the rest be possible?

The dreams came and went and she was too sensible not to laugh at them. That was not the youth of Giovanni, her husband, nor of men who even faintly resembled him in her estimation. Giovanni had wandered far, had seen much, and had undoubtedly indulged more than one passing affection, before he had been thirty years of age and had loved Corona. Giovanni would laugh too, if she told him of her vision of two young and beautiful married saints. And his laugh would be more sincere than her own. Nevertheless her dreams haunt-

ed her, as they have haunted many a loving mother, ever since Althæa plucked from the flame the burning brand that measured Meleager's life, and smothered the sparks upon it and hid it away among her treasures.

Such things seem foolish, no doubt, in the measure of fact, in the glaring light of our day. The thought is none the less noble. The dream of an untainted love, the vision of unspotted youth and pure maiden, the glory of unbroken faith kept whole by man and wife in holy wedlock, the pride of stainless name and stainless race—these things are not less high because there is a sublimity in the strength of a great sin which may lie the closer to our sympathy, as the sinning is the nearer to our weakness.

When old Saracinesca looked up from under his bushy brows and laughed and said that his grandson was in love, he thought no more of what he said than if he had remarked that Orsino's beard was growing or that Giovanni's was turning grey. But Corona's pretty fancies received a shock from which they never recovered again, and though she did her best to call them back they lost all their reality from that hour. The plain fact that at one-and-twenty years the boy is a man, though a very young one, was made suddenly clear to her; and she was faced by another fact still more destructive of her ideals, namely that a man is not to be kept from falling in love, when and where he is so inclined, by any personal influence whatsoever. She knew that well enough, and the supposition that his first young passion might be for Madame d'Aranjuez was by no means comforting. Corona immediately felt an interest in that lady which she had not felt before and which was not altogether friendly.

It seemed to her necessary in the first place to find out something definite concerning Maria Consuelo, and this was no easy matter. She communicated her wish to her husband when they were alone that evening.



"I know nothing about her," answered Giovanni; "and I do not know any one who does. After all it is of very little importance."

"What if he falls seriously in love with this woman?"

"We will send him round the world. At his age that will cure anything. When he comes back Madame d'Aranjuez will have retired to the chaos of the unknown out of which Orsino has evolved her."

"She does not look the kind of woman to disappear at the right moment," observed Corona doubtfully.

Giovanni was at that moment supremely comfortable, both in mind and body. It was late. The old prince had gone to his own quarters, the boys were in bed, and Orsino was presumably at a party or at the club. Sant' Ilario was enjoying the delight of spending an hour alone in his wife's society. They were in Corona's old boudoir, a place full of associations for them both. He did not want to be mentally disturbed. He said nothing in answer to his wife's remark. She repeated it in a different form.

"Women like her do not disappear when one does not want them," she said.

"What makes you think so?" inquired Giovanni with a man's irritating indolence when he does not mean to grasp a disagreeable idea.

"I know it," Corona answered, resting her chin upon her hand and staring at the fire.

Giovanni surrendered unconditionally.

"You are probably right, dear. You always are about people."

"Well—then you must see the importance of what I say," said Corona pushing her victory.

"Of course, of course," answered Giovanni, squinting at the flames with one eye between his outstretched fingers.

"I wish you would wake up!" exclaimed Corona, taking the hand in hers and drawing it to her. "Orsino is probably making love to Madame d'Aranjuez at this very moment."

"Then I will imitate him, and make love to you, my dear. I could not be better occupied, and you know it. You used to say I did it very well."

Corona laughed in her deep, soft voice.

"Orsino is like you. That is what frightens me. He will make love too well. Be serious, Giovanni; think of what I am saying."

"Let us dismiss the question then, for the simple reason that there is absolutely nothing to be done. We cannot turn this good woman out of Rome, and we cannot lock Orsino up in his room. To tell a boy not to bestow his affections in a certain quarter is like ramming a charge into a gun and then expecting that it will not come out by the same way. The harder you ram it down the more noise it makes—that is all. Encourage him, and he may possibly tire of it. Hinder him, and he will become inconveniently heroic."

"I suppose that is true," said Corona. "Then at least find out who the woman is," she added after a pause.

"I will try," Giovanni answered. "I will even go to the length of spending an hour a day at the club, if that will do any good—and you know how I detest clubs. But if anything whatever is known of her, it will be known there."

Giovanni kept his word and expended more energy in attempting to find out something about Madame d'Aranjuez during the next few days than he had devoted to anything connected with society for a long time. Nearly a week elapsed before his efforts met with any success.

He was in the club one afternoon at an early hour, reading the papers, and not more than three or four other men were present. Among them were Frangipani and Montevarchi, who was formerly known as Ascanio Bellegra. There was also a certain young foreigner, a diplomatist, who, like Sant' Ilario, was reading a paper, most probably in search of an idea for the next visit on his list.

Giovanni suddenly came upon a description of a dinner and reception given by Del Ferice and his wife. The paragraph was written in the usual florid style with a fine generosity in the distribution of titles to unknown persons. "The centre of all attraction," said the reporter, "was a most beautiful Spanish princess, Donna Maria Consuelo d'A——z d'A——a, in whose mysterious eyes are reflected the divine fires of a thousand triumphs, and who was gracefully attired in olive green brocade——"

"Oh! Is that it?" said Sant' Ilario aloud and in the peculiar tone always used by a man who makes a discovery in a daily paper.

"What is it?" inquired Frangipani and Montevarchi in the same breath. The young diplomatist looked up with an air of interrogation.

Sant' Ilario read the paragraph aloud. All three listened as though the fate of empires depended on the facts reported.

"Just like the newspapers!" exclaimed Frangipani. "There probably is no such person. Is there, Ascanio?"

Montevarchi had always been a weak fellow, and was reported to be at present very deep in the building speculations of the day. But there was one point upon which he justly prided himself. He was a superior authority on genealogy. It was his passion, and no one ever disputed his knowledge or decision. He stroked his fair beard, looked out of the window, winked his pale blue eyes once or twice and then gave his verdict.

"There is no such person," he said gravely.

"I beg your pardon, prince," said the young diplomatist, "I have met her. She exists."

"My dear friend," answered Montevarchi, "I do not doubt the existence of the woman, as such, and I would certainly not think of disagreeing with you, even if I had the slightest ground for doing so, which, I hasten

to say, I have not. Nor, of course, if she is a friend of yours, would I like to say more on the subject. But I have taken some little interest in genealogy and I have a modest library—about two thousand volumes only—consisting solely of works on the subject, all of which I have read and many of which I have carefully annotated. I need not say that they are all at your disposal if you should desire to make any researches."

Montevarchi had much of his murdered father's manner, without the old man's strength. The young Secretary of Embassy was rather startled at the idea of searching through two thousand volumes in pursuit of Madame d'Aranjuez's identity. Sant' Ilario laughed.

"I only mean that I have met the lady," said the young man. "Of course you are right. I have no idea who she may really be. I have heard odd stories about her."

"Oh—have you?" asked Sant' Ilario with renewed interest.

"Yes, very odd." He paused and looked round the room to assure himself that no one else was present. "There are two distinct stories about her. The first is this. They say that she is a South American *prima donna*, who sang only a few months, at Rio de Janeiro and then at Buenos Ayres. An Italian, who had gone out there and made a fortune, married her from the stage. In coming to Europe he unfortunately fell overboard, and she inherited all his money. People say that she was the only person who witnessed the accident. The man's name was Aragno. She twisted it once and made Aranjuez of it, and she turned it again and discovered that it spelled Aragona. That is the first story. It sounds well at all events."

"Very," said Sant' Ilario with a laugh.

"A profoundly interesting page in genealogy, if she happens to marry somebody," observed Montevarchi, mentally noting all the facts.

"What is the other story?" asked Frangipani.

"The other story is much less concise and detailed. According to this version, she is the daughter of a certain royal personage and of a Polish countess. There is always a Polish countess in those stories! She was never married. The royal personage has had her educated in a convent and has sent her out into the wide world with a pretty fancy name of his own invention, plentifully supplied with money and regular documents referring to her union with the imaginary Aranjuez, and protected by a sort of body-guard of mutes and duennas who never appear in public. She is of course to make a great match for herself, and has come to Rome to do it. That is also a pretty tale."

"More interesting than the other," said Montevarchi. "These side lights of genealogy, these stray rivulets of royal races, if I may so poetically call them, possess an absorbing interest for the student. I will make a note of it."

"Of course, I do not vouch for the truth of a single word in either story," observed the young man. "Of the two the first is the less improbable. I have met her and talked to her and she is certainly not less than five-and-twenty years old. She may be more. In any case she is too old to have been just let out of a convent."

"Perhaps she has been loose for some years," observed Sant' Ilario, speaking of her as though she were a dangerous wild animal.

"We should have heard of her," objected the other. "She has the sort of personality which is noticed anywhere and which makes itself felt."

"Then you incline to the belief that she dropped the Signor Aragno quietly overboard in the neighbourhood of the equator?"

"The real story may be quite different from either of those I have told you."

"And she is a friend of poor old Donna Tullia!" exclaimed Montevarchi regretfully. "I am sorry for

that. For the sake of her history I could almost have gone to the length of making her acquaintance."

"How the Del Ferice would rave if she could hear you call her poor old Donna Tullia," observed Frangipani. "I remember how she danced at the ball when I came of age!"

"That was a long time ago, Filippo," said Montevarchi thoughtfully, "a very long time ago. We were all young once, Filippo—but Donna Tullia is really only fit to fill a glass case in a museum of natural history now."

The remark was not original, and had been in circulation some time. But the three men laughed a little and Montevarchi was much pleased by their appreciation. He and Frangipani began to talk together, and Sant' Ilario took up his paper again. When the young diplomatist laid his own aside and went out, Giovanni followed him, and they left the club together.

"Have you any reason to believe that there is anything irregular about this Madame d'Aranjuez?" asked Sant' Ilario.

"No. Stories of that kind are generally inventions. She has not been presented at Court—but that means nothing here. And there is a doubt about her nationality—but no one has asked her directly about it."

"May I ask who told you the stories?"

The young man's face immediately lost all expression.

"Really—I have quite forgotten," he said. "People have been talking about her."

Sant' Ilario justly concluded that his companion's informant was a lady, and probably one in whom the diplomatist was interested. Discretion is so rare that it can easily be traced to its causes. Giovanni left the young man and walked away in the opposite direction, inwardly meditating a piece of diplomacy quite foreign to his nature. He said to himself that he would watch the man in the world and that it would be easy

to guess who the lady in question was. It would have been clear to any one but himself that he was not likely to learn anything worth knowing by his present mode of procedure.

"Gouache," he said, entering the artist's studio a quarter of an hour later, "do you know anything about Madame d'Aranjuez?"

"That is all I know," Gouache answered, pointing to Maria Consuelo's portrait which stood finished upon an easel before him, set in an old frame. He had been touching it when Giovanni entered. "That is all I know, and I do not know that thoroughly. I wish I did. She is a wonderful subject."

Sant' Ilario gazed at the picture in silence.

"Are her eyes really like these?" he asked at length.

"Much finer."

"And her mouth?"

"Much larger," answered Gouache with a smile.

"She is bad," said Giovanni with conviction, and he thought of the Signor Aragno.

"Women are never bad," observed Gouache with a thoughtful air. "Some are less angelic than others. You need only tell them all so to assure yourself of the fact."

"I dare say. What is this person? French, Spanish—South American?"

"I have not the least idea. She is not French, at all events."

"Excuse me—does your wife know her?"

Gouache glanced quickly at his visitor's face.

"No."

Gouache was a singularly kind man, and he did his best, perhaps for reasons of his own, to convey nothing by the monosyllable beyond the simple negation of a fact. But the effort was not altogether successful. There was an almost imperceptible shade of surprise in the tone which did not escape Giovanni. On the other hand it was perfectly clear to Gouache that Sant' Ilario's interest in the matter was connected with Orsino.

"I cannot find any one who knows anything definite," said Giovanni after a pause.

"Have you tried Spicca?" asked the artist, examining his work critically.

"No. Why Spicca?"

"He always knows everything," answered Gouache vaguely. "By the way, Saracinesca, do you not think there might be a little more light just over the left eye?"

"How should I know?"

"You ought to know. What is the use of having been brought up under the very noses of original portraits, all painted by the best masters and doubtless ordered by your ancestors at a very considerable expense—if you do not know?"

Giovanni laughed.

"My dear old friend," he said good-humouredly, "have you known us nearly five-and-twenty years without discovering that it is our peculiar privilege to be ignorant without reproach?"

Gouache laughed in his turn.

"You do not often make sharp remarks—but when you do!"

Giovanni left the studio very soon, and went in search of Spicca. It was no easy matter to find the peripatetic cynic on a winter's afternoon, but Gouache's remark had seemed to mean something, and Sant' Ilario saw a faint glimmer of hope in the distance. He knew Spicca's habits very well, and was aware that when the sun was low he would certainly turn into one of the many houses where he was intimate, and spend an hour over a cup of tea. The difficulty lay in ascertaining which particular fireside he would select on that afternoon. Giovanni hastily sketched a route for himself and asked the porter at each of his friends' houses if Spicca had entered. Fortune favoured him at last. Spicca was drinking his tea with the Marchesa di San Giacinto.

Giovanni paused a moment before the gateway of the palace in which San Giacinto had inhabited a large hired

apartment for many years. He did not see much of his cousin, now, on account of differences in political opinion, and he had no reason whatever for calling on Flavia, especially as formal New Year's visits had lately been exchanged. However, as San Giacinto was now a leading authority on questions of landed property in the city, it struck him that he could pretend a desire to see Flavia's husband, and make that an excuse for staying a long time, if necessary, in order to wait for him.

He found Flavia and Spicca alone together, with a small tea-table between them. The air was heavy with the smoke of cigarettes, which clung to the oriental curtains and hung in clouds about the rare palms and plants. Everything in the San Giacinto house was large, comfortable, and unostentatious. There was not a chair to be seen which might not have held the giant's frame. San Giacinto was a wonderful judge of what was good. If he paid twice as much as Montevarchi for a horse, the horse turned out to be capable of four times the work. If he bought a picture at a sale, it was discovered to be by some good master and other people wondered why they had lost courage in the bidding for a trifle of a hundred francs. Nothing ever turned out badly with him, but no success had the power to shake his solid prudence. No one knew how rich he was, but those who had watched him understood that he would never let the world guess at half his fortune. He was a giant in all ways and he had shown what he could do when he had dominated Flavia during the first year of their marriage. She had at first been proud of him, but about the time when she would have wearied of another man, she discovered that she feared him in a way she certainly did not fear the devil. Yet he had never spoken a harsh word to her in his life. But there was something positively appalling to her in his enormous strength, rarely exhibited and never

without good reason, but always quietly present, as the outline of a vast mountain reflected in a placid lake. Then she discovered to her great surprise that he really loved her, which she had not expected, and at the end of three years he became aware that she loved him, which was still more astonishing. As usual, his investment had turned out well.

At the time of which I am speaking Flavia was a slight, graceful woman of forty years or thereabouts, retaining much of the brilliant prettiness which served her for beauty, and conspicuous always for her extremely bright eyes. She was of the type of women who live to a great age.

She had not expected to see Sant' Ilario, and as she gave her hand, she looked up at him with an air of inquiry. It would have been like him to say that he had come to see her husband and not herself, for he had no tact with persons whom he did not especially like. There are such people in the world.

"Will you give me a cup of tea, Flavia?" he asked, as he sat down, after shaking hands with Spicca.

"Have you at last heard that your cousin's tea is good?" inquired the latter, who was surprised by Giovanni's coming.

"I am afraid it is cold," said Flavia looking into the teapot, as though she could discover the temperature by inspection.

"It is no matter," answered Giovanni absently.

He was wondering how he could lead the conversation to the discussion of Madame d'Aranjuez.

"You belong to the swallowers," observed Spicca, lighting a fresh cigarette. "You swallow something, no matter what, and you are satisfied."

"It is the simplest way—one is never disappointed."

"It is a pity one cannot swallow people in the same way," said Flavia with a laugh.

"Most people do," answered Spicca, viciously.



"Were you at the Jubilee on the first day?" asked Giovanni addressing Flavia.

"Of course I was—and you spoke to me."

"That is true. By the by, I saw that excellent Donna Tullia there. I wonder whose ticket she had."

"She had the Princess Befana's," answered Spicca, who knew everything. "The old lady happened to be dying—she always dies at the beginning of the season—it used to be for economy but it has become a habit—and so Del Ferice bought her card of her servant for his wife."

"Who was the lady who sat with her?" asked Giovanni delighted with his own skill.

"You ought to know!" exclaimed Flavia. "We all saw Orsino take her out. That is the famous, the incomparable Madame d'Aranjuez—the most beautiful of Spanish princesses according to to-day's paper. I dare say you have seen the account of the Del Ferice party. She is no more Spanish than Alexander the Great. Is she, Spicca?"

"No, she is not Spanish," answered the latter.

"Then what in the world is she?" asked Giovanni impatiently.

"How should I know? Of course it is very disagreeable for you." It was Flavia who spoke.

"Disagreeable? How?"

"Why, about Orsino of course. Everybody says he is devoted to her."

"I wish everybody would mind his and her business," said Giovanni sharply. "Because a boy makes the acquaintance of a stranger at a studio —"

"Oh,—it was at a studio? I did not know that."

"Yes, at Gouache's—I fancied your sister might have told you that," said Giovanni, growing more and more irritable, and yet not daring to change the subject, lest he should lose some valuable information. "Because Orsino makes her acquaintance accidentally,

every one must say that he is in love with her."

Flavia laughed.

"My dear Giovanni," she answered. "Let us be frank. I used never to tell the truth under any circumstances when I was a girl, but, Giovanni—my Giovanni—did not like that. Do you know what he did? He used to cut off a hundred francs of my allowance for every fib I told—laughing at me all the time. At the end of the first quarter I positively had not a pair of shoes, and all my gloves had been cleaned twice. He used to keep all the fines in a special pocket-book—if you knew how hard I tried to steal it! But I could not. Then, of course, I reformed. There was nothing else to be done—that or rags—fancy! And do you know I have grown quite used to being truthful? Besides, it is so original, that I pose with it."

Flavia paused, laughed a little, and puffed at her cigarette.

"You do not often come to see me, Giovanni," she said, "and since you are here I am going to tell you the truth about your visit. You are beside yourself with rage at Orsino's new fancy, and you want to find out all about this Madame d'Aranjuez. So you came here because we are Whites, and you saw that she had been at the Del Ferice party, and you know that we know them—and the rest is sung by the organ, as we say when high mass is over. Is that the truth or not?"

"Approximately," said Giovanni, smiling in spite of himself.

"Does Corona cut your allowance when you tell fibs?" asked Flavia. "No! Then why say that it is only approximately true?"

"I have my reasons. And you can tell me nothing?"

"Nothing. I believe Spicca knows all about her. But he will not tell what he knows."

Spicca made no answer to this, and Giovanni determined to outstay him, or rather, until he rose to go and then go with him. It was tedious work for

he was not a man who could talk against time on all occasions. But he struggled bravely and Spicca at last got up from his deep chair. They went out together, and stopped as though by common consent upon the brilliantly lighted landing of the first floor.

"Seriously, Spicca," said Giovanni, "I am afraid Orsino is falling in love with this pretty stranger. If you can tell me anything about her, please do so."

Spicca stared at the wall, hesitated a moment, and then looked straight into his companion's eyes.

"Have you any reason to suppose that I, and I especially, know anything about this lady?" he asked.

"No—except that you know everything."

"That is a fable." Spicca turned from him and began to descend the stairs.

Giovanni followed and laid a hand upon his arm.

"You will not do me this service?" he asked earnestly.

Again Spicca stopped and looked at him.

"You and I are very old friends, Giovanni," he said slowly. "I am older than you, but we have stood by each other very often—in places more slippery than these marble steps. Do not let us quarrel now, old friend. When I tell you that my omniscience exists only in the vivid imaginations of people whose tea I like, believe me; and if you wish to do me a kindness—for the sake of old times—do not help to spread the idea that I know everything."

The melancholy Spicca had never been given to talking about friendship or its mutual obligations. Indeed, Giovanni could not remember having ever heard him speak as he had just spoken. It was perfectly clear that he knew something very definite about Maria Consuelo, and he probably had no intention of deceiving Giovanni in that respect. But Spicca also knew his man, and he knew that his appeal

for Giovanni's silence would not be vain.

"Very well," said Sant' Ilario.

They exchanged a few indifferent words before parting, and then Giovanni walked slowly homeward, pondering on the things he had heard that day.

## CHAPTER VIII.

WHILE Giovanni was exerting himself to little purpose in attempting to gain information concerning Maria Consuelo, she had launched herself upon the society of which the Countess Del Ferice was an important and influential member. Chance, and probably chance alone, had guided her in the matter of this acquaintance, for it could certainly not be said that she had forced herself upon Donna Tullia, nor even shown any uncommon readiness to meet the latter's advances. The offer of a seat in her carriage had seemed natural enough, in the circumstances, and Donna Tullia had been perfectly free to refuse it if she had chosen to do so.

Though possessing but the very slightest grounds for believing herself to be a born diplomatist, the Countess had always delighted in petty plotting and scheming. She now saw a possibility of annoying all Orsino's relations by attracting the object of Orsino's devotion to her own house. She had no especial reason for supposing that the young man was really very much in love with Madame d'Aranjuez, but her woman's instinct, which far surpassed her diplomatic talents in acuteness, told her that Orsino was certainly not indifferent to the interesting stranger. She argued, primitively enough, that to annoy Orsino must be equivalent to annoying his people; and she supposed that she could do nothing more disagreeable to the young man's wishes than to induce Madame d'Aranjuez to join that part of society from which all the Saracinesca were separated by an insuperable barrier.

And Orsino indeed resented the proceeding, as she had expected ; but his family were at first more inclined to look upon Donna Tullia as a good angel who had carried off the tempter at the right moment to an unapproachable distance. It was not to be believed that Orsino could do anything so monstrous as to enter Del Ferice's house or ask a place in Del Ferice's circle, and it was accordingly a relief to find that Madame d'Aranjuez had definitely chosen to do so, and had appeared in olive-green brocade at the Del Ferice's last party. The olive-green brocade would now assuredly not figure in the gatherings of the Saracinesca's intimate friends.

Like every one else, Orsino read the daily chronicle of Roman life in the papers, and until he saw Maria Consuelo's name among the Del Ferice's guests, he refused to believe that she had taken the irrevocable step he so much feared. He had still entertained vague notions of bringing about a meeting between her and his mother, and he saw at a glance that such a meeting was now quite out of the question. This was the first severe shock his vanity had ever received, and he was surprised at the depth of his own annoyance. Maria Consuelo might indeed have been seen once with Donna Tullia, and might have gone once to the latter's day. That was bad enough, but might be remedied by tact and decision in her subsequent conduct. But there was no salvation possible after a person had been advertised in the daily paper as Madame d'Aranjuez had been. Orsino was very angry. He had been once to see her since his first visit, and she had said nothing about this invitation, though Donna Tullia's name had been mentioned. He was offended with her for not telling him that she was going to the dinner, as though he had any right to be made acquainted with her intentions. He had no sooner made the discovery than he determined to visit his anger upon her, and throwing the paper

aside went straight to the hotel where she was stopping.

Maria Consuelo was at home and he was ushered into the little sitting-room without delay. To his inexpressible disgust he found Del Ferice himself installed upon the chair near the table engaged in animated conversation with Madame d'Aranjuez. The situation was awkward in the extreme. Orsino hoped that Del Ferice would go at once, and thus avoid the necessity of an introduction. But Ugo did nothing of the kind. He rose, indeed, but did not take his hat from the table, and stood smiling pleasantly while Orsino shook hands with Maria Consuelo.

"Let me make you acquainted," she said with exasperating calmness, and she named the two men to each other.

Ugo put out his hand quietly and Orsino was obliged to take it, which he did coldly enough. Ugo had more than his share of tact, and he never made a disagreeable impression upon any one if he could help it. Maria Consuelo seemed to take everything for granted, and Orsino's appearance did not disconcert her in the slightest degree. Both men sat down, and looked at her as though expecting that she would choose a subject of conversation for them.

"We were talking of the change in Rome," she said. "Monsieur Del Ferice takes a great interest in all that is doing, and he was explaining to me some of the difficulties with which he has to contend."

"Don Orsino knows what they are, as well as I, though we might perhaps differ as to the way of dealing with them," said Del Ferice.

"Yes," answered Orsino, more coldly than was necessary. "You play the active part, and we the passive."

"In a certain sense, yes," returned the other, quite unruffled. "You have exactly defined the situation, and ours is by far the more disagreeable and thankless part to play."

Oh—I am not going to defend all we have done! I only defend what we mean to do. Change of any sort is execrable to the man of taste, unless it is brought about by time—and that is a beautifier which we have not at our disposal. We are half Vandals and half Americans; and we are in a terrible hurry.”

Maria Consuelo laughed, and Orsino's face became a shade less gloomy. He had expected to find Del Ferice the arrogant, self-satisfied apostle of the modern which he was represented to be.

“Could you not have taken a little more time?” asked Orsino.

“I cannot see how. Besides it is our time which takes us with it. So long as Rome was the capital of an idea there was no need of haste in doing anything. But when it became the capital of a modern kingdom, it fell a victim to modern facts—which are not beautiful. The most we can hope to do is to direct the current, clumsily enough, I dare say. We cannot stop it. Nothing short of Oriental despotism could. We cannot prevent people from flocking to the centre, and where there is a population it must be housed.”

“Evidently,” said Madame d'Aranjuez.

“It seems to me that, without disturbing the old city, a new one might have been built beside it,” observed Orsino.

“No doubt. And that is practically what we have done. I say ‘we,’ because you say ‘you.’ But I think you will admit that, so far as personal activity is concerned, the Romans of Rome are taking as active a share in building ugly houses as any of the Italian Romans. The destruction of the Villa Ludovisi, for instance, was forced upon the owner not by the national government but by an insane municipality, and those who have taken over the building-lots are largely Roman princes of the old stock.”

The argument was unanswerable, and Orsino knew it, a fact which did

not improve his temper. It was disagreeable enough to be forced into a conversation with Del Ferice, and it was still worse to be obliged to agree with him. Orsino frowned and said nothing, hoping that the subject would drop. But Del Ferice had only produced an unpleasant impression in order to remove it and thereby improve the whole situation, which was one of the most difficult in which he had found himself for some time.

“I repeat,” he said, with a pleasant smile, “that it is hopeless to defend all of what is actually done in our day in Rome. Some of your friends and many of mine are building houses which even age and ruin will never beautify. The only defensible part of the affair is the political change which has brought about the necessity of building at all, and upon that point I think that we may agree to differ. Do you not think so, Don Orsino?”

“By all means,” answered the young man, conscious that the proposal was both just and fitting.

“And for the rest, both your friends and mine—for all I know, your own family and certainly I myself—have enormous interests at stake. We may at least agree to hope that none of us may be ruined.”

“Certainly—though we have had nothing to do with the matter. Neither my father nor my grandfather has entered into any such speculation.”

“It is a pity,” said Del Ferice thoughtfully.

“Why a pity?”

“On the one hand my instincts are basely commercial,” Del Ferice answered with a frank laugh. “No matter how great a fortune may be, it may be doubled and trebled. You must remember that I am a banker in fact if not exactly in designation, and the opportunity is excellent. But the greater pity is that such men as you, Don Orsino, who could exercise as much influence as it might please you to use, leave it to men—very unlike you, I fancy—to murder the architec-

ture of Rome and prepare the triumph of the hideous."

Orsino did not answer the remark, although he was not altogether displeased with the idea it conveyed. Maria Consuelo looked at him.

"Why do you stand aloof and let things go from bad to worse when you might really do good by joining in the affairs of the day?" she asked.

"I could not join in them, if I would," answered Orsino.

"Why not?"

"Because I have not command of a hundred francs in the world, madame. That is the simplest and best of all reasons."

Del Ferice laughed incredulously.

"The eldest son of Casa Saracinesca would not find that a practical obstacle," he said taking his hat and rising to go. "Besides, what is needed in these transactions is not so much ready money as courage, decision, and judgment. There is a rich firm of contractors now doing a large business, who began with three thousand francs as their whole capital—what you might lose at cards in an evening without missing it, though you say that you have no money at your command."

"Is that possible?" asked Orsino with some interest.

"It is a fact. There were three men, a tobacconist, a carpenter, and a mason, and they each had a thousand francs of savings. They took over a contract last week for a million and a half, on which they will clear twenty per cent. But they had the qualities—the daring and the prudence combined. They succeeded."

"And if they had failed, what would have happened?"

"They would have lost their three thousand francs. They had nothing else to lose, and there was nothing in the least irregular about their transactions. Good evening, madame—I have a private meeting of directors at my house. Good evening, Don Orsino."

He went out, leaving behind him an

impression which was not by any means disagreeable. His appearance was against him, Orsino thought. His fat white face and dull eyes were not pleasant to look at. But he had shown tact in a difficult situation, and there was a quiet energy about him, a settled purpose which could not fail to please a young man who hated his own idleness.

Orsino found that his mood had changed. He was less angry than he had meant to be, and he saw extenuating circumstances where he had at first only seen a wilful mistake. He sat down again.

"Confess that he is not the impossible creature you supposed," said Maria Consuelo with a laugh.

"No, he is not. I had imagined something very different. Nevertheless, I wish—one never has the least right to wish what one wishes——" He stopped in the middle of the sentence.

"That I had not gone to his wife's party, you would say? But, my dear Don Orsino, why should I refuse pleasant things when they come into my life?"

"Was it so pleasant?"

"Of course it was. A beautiful dinner,—half-a-dozen clevermen, all interested in the affairs of the day, and all anxious to explain them to me because I was a stranger. A hundred people or so in the evening, who all seemed to enjoy themselves as much as I did. Why should I refuse all that? Because my first acquaintance in Rome—who was Gouache—is so 'indifferent,' and because you—my second—are a pronounced clerical! That is not reasonable."

"I do not pretend to be reasonable," said Orsino. "To be reasonable is the boast of people who feel nothing."

"Then you are a man of heart?" Maria Consuelo seemed amused.

"I make no pretence to being a man of head, madame."

"You are not easily caught."

"Nor Del Ferice either."



"Why do you talk of him?"

"The opportunity is good, madame. As he has just gone, we know that he is not coming."

"You can be very sarcastic, when you like," said Maria Consuelo. "But I do not believe that you are so bitter as you make yourself out to be. I do not even believe that you found Del Ferice so very disagreeable as you pretend. You were certainly interested in what he said."

"Interest is not always agreeable. The guillotine, for instance, possesses the most lively interest for the condemned man, at an execution."

"Your illustrations are startling. I once saw an execution, quite by accident, and I would rather not think of it. But you can hardly compare Del Ferice to the guillotine."

"He is as noiseless, as keen, and as sure," said Orsino smartly.

"There is such a thing as being too clever," answered Maria Consuelo without a smile.

"Is Del Ferice a case of that?"

"No. You are. You say cutting things merely because they come into your head, though I am sure that you do not always mean them. It is a bad habit."

"Because it makes enemies, madame?" Orsino was annoyed by the rebuke.

"That is the least good of good reasons."

"Another then?"

"It will prevent people from loving you," said Maria Consuelo gravely.

"I never heard that——"

"No? It is true, nevertheless."

"In that case I will reform at once," said Orsino, trying to meet her eyes. But she looked away from him.

"You think that I am preaching to you," she answered. "I have not the right to do that, and if I had, I would certainly not use it. But I have seen something of the world. Women rarely love a man who is bitter against any one but himself. If he says cruel things of other women, the one to

whom he says them believes that he will say much worse of her to the next he meets; if he abuses the men she knows, she likes it even less—it is an attack on her judgment, on her taste, and perhaps upon a half-developed sympathy for the man attacked. One should never be witty at another person's expense except with one's own sex." She laughed a little.

"What a terrible conclusion!"

"Is it? It is the true one."

"Then the way to win a woman's love is to praise her acquaintances? That is original."

"I never said that."

"No? I misunderstood. What is the best way?"

"Oh—it is very simple," laughed Maria Consuelo. "Tell her you love her, and tell her so again and again—you will certainly please her in the end."

"Madame——" Orsino stopped, and folded his hands with an air of devout supplication.

"What?"

"Oh, nothing! I was about to begin. It seemed so simple, as you say."

They both laughed and their eyes met for a moment.

"Del Ferice interests me very much," said Maria Consuelo, abruptly returning to the original subject of conversation. "He is one of those men who will be held responsible for much that is now doing. Is it not true? He has great influence."

"I have always heard so." Orsino was not pleased at being driven to talk of Del Ferice again.

"Do you think what he said about you so altogether absurd?"

"Absurd, no—impracticable, perhaps. You mean his suggestion that I should try a little speculation? Frankly, I had no idea that such things could be begun with so little capital. It seems incredible. I fancy that Del Ferice was exaggerating. You know how carelessly bankers talk of a few thousands, more or less. Nothing short of a million has much

meaning for them. Three thousand or thirty thousand—it is much the same in their estimation.”

“I dare say. After all, why should you risk anything? I suppose it is simpler to play cards, though I should think it less amusing. I was only thinking how easy it would be for you to find a serious occupation if you chose.”

Orsino was silent for a moment, and seemed to be thinking over the matter.

“Would you advise me to enter upon such a business without my father’s knowledge?” he asked presently.

“How can I advise you? Besides, your father would let you do as you please. There is nothing dishonourable in such things. The prejudice against business is old-fashioned, and if you do not break through it your children will.”

Orsino looked thoughtfully at Maria Consuelo. She sometimes found an oddly masculine bluntness with which to express her meaning, and which produced a singular impression on the young man. It made him feel what he supposed to be a sort of weakness, of which he ought to be ashamed.

“There is nothing dishonourable in the theory,” he answered, “and the practice depends on the individual.”

Maria Consuelo laughed.

“You see—you can be a moralist when you please,” she said.

There was a wonderful attraction in her yellow eyes just at that moment.

“To please you, madame, I could do something much worse—or much better.”

He was not quite in earnest, but he was not jesting, and his face was more serious than his voice. Maria Consuelo’s hand was lying on the table beside the silver paper-cutter. The white, pointed fingers were very tempting and he would willingly have touched them. He put out his hand. If she did not draw hers away he would lay his own upon it. If she did, he would take up the paper-

cutter. As it turned out, he had to content himself with the latter. She did not draw her hand away as though she understood what he was going to do, but quietly raised it and turned the shade of the lamp a few inches.

“I would rather not be responsible for your choice,” she said quietly.

“And yet you have left me none,” he answered with sudden boldness.

“No? How so?”

He held up the silver knife and smiled.

“I do not understand,” she said, affecting a look of surprise.

“I was going to ask your permission to take your hand.”

“Indeed? Why? There it is.” She held it out frankly.

He took the beautiful fingers in his and looked at them for a moment. Then he quietly raised them to his lips.

“That was not included in the permission,” she said with a little laugh and drawing back. “Now you ought to go away at once.”

“Why?”

“Because that little ceremony can belong only to the beginning or the end of a visit.”

“I have only just come.”

“Ah? How long the time has seemed! I fancied you had been here half an hour.”

“To me it has seemed but a minute,” answered Orsino promptly.

“And you will not go?”

There was nothing of the nature of a peremptory dismissal in the look which accompanied the words.

“No—at the most, I will practise leave-taking.”

“I think not,” said Maria Consuelo with sudden coldness. “You are a little too—what shall I say?—too enterprising, prince. You had better make use of the gift where it will be a recommendation—in business, for instance.”

“You are very severe, madame,” answered Orsino, deeming it wiser to affect humility, though a dozen sharp answers suggested themselves to his ready wit.

Maria Consuelo was silent for a few seconds. Her head was resting upon the little red morocco cushion, which heightened the dazzling whiteness of her skin and lent a deeper colour to her auburn hair. She was gazing at the hangings above the door. Orsino watched her in quiet admiration. She was beautiful as he saw her there at that moment, for the irregularities of her features were forgotten in the brilliancy of her colouring and in the grace of the attitude. Her face was serious at first. Gradually a smile stole over it, beginning, as it seemed, from the deeply set eyes and concentrating itself at last in the full red mouth. Then she spoke, still looking upwards and away from him.

"What would you think if I were not a little severe?" she asked. "I am a woman living—travelling, I should say—quite alone, a stranger here, and little less than a stranger to you. What would you think if I were not a little severe, I say? What conclusion would you come to, if I let you take my hand as often as you pleased, and say whatever suggested itself to your imagination—your very active imagination?"

"I should think you the most adorable of women——"

"But it is not my ambition to be thought the most adorable of women by you, Prince Orsino."

"No—of course not. People never care for what they get without an effort."

"You are absolutely irrepressible!" exclaimed Maria Consuelo, laughing in spite of herself.

"And you do not like that! I will be meekness itself—a lamb, if you please."

"Too playful—it would not suit your style."

"A stone——"

"I detest geology."

"A lap-dog, then, make your choice, madame. The menagerie of the universe is at your disposal. When Adam gave names to the animals, he could have called a lion a lap-

dog—to reassure the Africans. But he lacked imagination—he called a cat, a cat."

"That had the merit of simplicity, at all events."

"Since you admire his system, you may call me either Cain or Abel," suggested Orsino. "Am I humble enough? Can submission go farther?"

"Either would be flattery—for Abel was good and Cain was interesting."

"And I am neither—you give me another opportunity of exhibiting my deep humility. I thank you sincerely. You are becoming more gracious than I had hoped."

"You are very like a woman, Don Orsino. You always try to have the last word."

"I always hope that the last word may be the best. But I accept the criticism, or the reproach, with my usual gratitude. I only beg you to observe that to let you have the last word would be for me to end the conversation, after which I should be obliged to go away. And I do not wish to go, as I have already said."

"You suggest the means of making you go," answered Maria Consuelo, with a smile. "I can be silent—if you will not."

"It will be useless. If you do not interrupt me, I shall become eloquent——"

"How terrible! Pray do not!"

"You see! I have you in my power. You cannot get rid of me."

"I would appeal to your generosity, then."

"That is another matter, madame," said Orsino, taking his hat.

"I only said that I would——" Maria Consuelo made a gesture to stop him.

But he was wise enough to see that the conversation had reached its natural end, and his instinct told him that he should not outstay his welcome. He pretended not to see the motion of her hand, and rose to take his leave.

"You do not know me," he said. "To point out to me a possible

generous action, is to ensure my performing it without hesitation. When may I be so fortunate as to see you again, madame?"

"You need not be so intensely ceremonious. You know that I am always at home at this hour."

Orsino was very much struck by this answer. There was a shade of irritation in the tone, which he had certainly not expected, and which flattered him exceedingly. She turned her face away as she gave him her hand and moved a book on the table with the other as though she meant to begin reading almost before he should be out of the room. He had not felt by any means sure that she really liked his society, and he had not expected that she would so far forget herself as to show her inclination by her impatience. He had judged, rightly or wrongly, that she was a woman who weighed every word and gesture beforehand, and who would be incapable of such an oversight as an unpremeditated manifestation of feeling.

Very young men are nowadays apt to imagine complications of character where they do not exist, often overlooking them altogether where they play a real part. The passion for analysis discovers what it takes for new simple elements in humanity's motives, and often ends by feeding on itself in the effort to decompose what is not composite. The greatest analysers are perhaps the young and the old, who being respectively before and behind the times, are not so intimate with them as those who are actually making history, political or social, ethical or scandalous, dramatic or comic.

It is very much the custom among those who write fiction in the English language to efface their own individuality behind the majestic but rather meaningless plural "we," or to let the characters created express the author's view of mankind. The great French novelists are more frank, for they say boldly "I," and have the

courage of their opinions. Their merit is the greater, since those opinions seem to be rarely complimentary to the human race in general, or to their readers in particular. Without introducing any comparison between the fiction of the two languages, it may be said that the tendency of the method is identical in both cases and is the consequence of an extreme preference for analysis, to the detriment of the romantic and very often of the dramatic element in the modern novel. The result may or may not be a volume of modern social history for the instruction of the present and the future generation. If it is not, it loses one of the chief merits which it claims; if it is, then we must admit the rather strange deduction, that the political history of our times has absorbed into itself all the romance and the tragedy at the disposal of destiny, leaving next to none at all in the private lives of the actors and their numerous relations.

Whatever the truth may be, it is certain that this love of minute dissection is exercising an enormous influence in our time; and as no one will pretend that a majority of the young persons in society who analyse the motives of their contemporaries and elders are successful moral anatomists we are forced to the conclusion that they are frequently indebted to their imaginations for the results they obtain and not seldom for the material upon which they work. A real Chemistry may some day grow out of the failures of this fanciful Alchemy, but the present generation will hardly live to discover the philosopher's stone, though the search for it yield gold, indirectly, by the writing of many novels. If fiction is to be counted among the arts at all, it is not yet time to forget the saying of a very great man: "It is the mission of all art to create and foster agreeable illusions."

Orsino Saracinesca was no further removed from the action of the analytical bacillus than other men of his

age. He believed and desired his own character to be more complicated than it was, and he had no sooner made the acquaintance of Maria Consuelo than he began to attribute to her minutest actions such a tortuous web of motives as would have annihilated all action if it had really existed in her brain. The possible simplicity of a strong and much tried character, good or bad, altogether escaped him, and even an occasional unrestrained word or gesture failed to convince him that he was on the wrong track. To tell the truth, he was as yet very inexperienced. His visits to Maria Consuelo passed in making light conversation. He tried to amuse her, and succeeded fairly well, while at the same time he indulged in endless and fruitless speculations as to her former life, her present intentions and her sentiments with regard to himself. He would have liked to lead her into talking of herself, but he did not know where to begin. It was not a part of his system to believe in mysteries concerning people, but when he reflected upon the matter he was amazed at the impenetrability of the barrier which cut him off from all knowledge of her life. He soon heard the tales about her which were carelessly circulated at the club, and he listened to them without much interest, though he took the trouble to deny their truth on his own responsibility, which surprised the men who knew him, and gave rise to the story that he was in love with Madame d'Aranjuez. The most annoying consequence of the rumour was that every

woman to whom he spoke in society overwhelmed him with questions which he could not answer except in the vaguest terms. In his ignorance he did his best to evolve a satisfactory history for Maria Consuelo out of his imagination, but the result was not satisfactory.

He continued his visits to her, resolving before each meeting that he would risk offending her by putting some question which she must either answer directly or refuse to answer altogether. But he had not counted upon his own inherent hatred of rudeness, nor upon the growth of an attachment which he had not foreseen when he had coldly made up his mind that it would be worth while to make love to her, as Gouache had laughingly suggested. Yet he was pleased with what he deemed his own coldness. He assuredly did not love her, but he knew already that he would not like to give up the half-hours he spent with her. To offend her seriously would be to forfeit a portion of his daily amusement which he could not spare.

From time to time he risked a careless, half-jesting declaration such as many a woman might have taken seriously. But Maria Consuelo turned such advances with a laugh or by an answer that was admirably tempered with quiet dignity and friendly rebuke.

"If she is not good," he said to himself at last, "she must be enormously clever. She must be one or the other."

*(To be continued.)*



## PATRICK HENRY.

It is not often that the English traveller in America finds his way to the capital of the old Dominion,—that pleasant city beneath whose red hills the turbulent James, with one last effort of rush and roar, subsides into the broad reaches of its tidal way. When, however, he does deviate thus far from the beaten track, he will find in these days of Southern progress the factory and the town-lot uppermost in the local mind.

Twenty years ago it was otherwise. Richmond was then the mausoleum of a ruined cause, and lay brooding helplessly over the ashes of the past. It is the Richmond which perished, socially and politically, amid the battle-shouts of a quarter of a million of armed men, not the second-rate Cincinnati which is arising in its place, that will most interest the educated visitor. He, unless haply provided with a better guide, will in all probability succumb to the importunities of the Ethiopian Jehu, who will give him not only his money's worth of locomotion, but a great deal of gratuitous information of both a practical and a farcical kind. If the negro hackman of Richmond has not of late years gone back on his traditions, he will pay a tribute first to ancient history, and drive at his best pace, without a word and as a matter of course, to a venerable wooden edifice in a quiet street. Pausing in front of this unimposing pile, and directing his passenger's earnest and immediate attention to it with the stump of a broken whip, he will thus address him,—“Right dar's whar old man Partick Henry spoke de famous piece of liberty or def.” Having paid this time-honoured tribute to the vanished past, the worthy fellow will rattle on, with a grateful sense of having done his duty, into the scenes

of deeds more recent and familiar to his ears than the events which produced Patrick Henry's immortal oration. Even the audacious imagination of a Southern Negro, with a Yankee or a foreigner to practise on, would hardly claim to have shared in the debates of 1772. In the siege and burning of Richmond, however, our friend will be quite sure to have taken an active personal part. Nor will his tale lose anything of its graphic lucidity even if you happen to know that, during the whole of these stormy scenes, he was peacefully and loyally raising a crop of corn for the family of his absent master, far out of reach of the distant thunder of the cannon.

Patrick Henry occupies an almost unique place upon the scroll of fame. I believe I am right in saying that to great numbers of cultivated and well-read Englishmen his name conveys scarcely any meaning; to the great majority of people upon this side, none at all. Now, in America, on the contrary, his name stands among the very foremost of the revolutionary leaders. There is hardly a schoolboy who cannot repeat the more famous passages in his declamations. That the three millions of Anglo-Saxons then in America produced at that period a remarkable crop of capable, and many even brilliant men, is a fact beyond question. This excessive supply was due partly no doubt to accident, but also in great measure to the wide diffusion of internal political responsibility. This, again, was abnormally developed by the grave inter-continental questions which agitated the Colonies for so many years. Now of all the men who rose to distinction as founders of the United States, Patrick Henry was by far the greatest orator, and, in some ways, the most striking

figure. Eloquence has always carried immense weight with it among Americans, and at that time for many reasons it was particularly effective. America has been prolific, too, of fluent and effective speakers, but Henry still stands out in the estimation of his countrymen as the greatest orator their soil has produced; and when one recalls the momentous issues to which his eloquence was so successfully devoted, it seems strange that his name should be so much more unfamiliar to English ears than those of Jefferson, Adams, Hamilton, or Franklin. As an agitator at a critical time, he may almost be said, so far as the Southern Colonies were concerned, to have forced out of the scabbard by his eloquence the sword that his great neighbour and fellow-Virginian was so successfully to wield.

Henry was born in 1736 in the county of Hanover, not very far from Richmond. His father was a Scotchman of a good, educated, middle-class family. His uncle was minister of Borthwick. One cousin was editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and another Principal of Edinburgh University. The older Henry married a Virginian widow-lady of sufficient property to give him at once a foothold in the squirearchical society that then administered law and justice in Colonial Virginia. He became county surveyor, colonel of militia, and finally presiding justice of the county court. These latter honours, on a somewhat smaller and less exacting scale, indicate much the same social distinction they would have done in Hampshire or Suffolk.

Society was then tenaciously English, based upon landed property and to some extent, though much less than in later years, on negroes. Imagine an English county in the last century with the higher aristocracy removed and the squires of small or moderate fortune left, and you have something like a county of Tidewater, Virginia, in 1736. The parallel is very nearly, though not quite, complete. The Vir-

ginia squires, for instance, were such by virtue of properties and servants sufficient to maintain them as gentlemen farmers, with the manners and education of gentlemen transmitted through each generation. Primogeniture and entail were in vogue, and a herald at Williamsburg sat in judgment on shields and quarterings. His difficulties must have been considerable, but his existence sufficiently indicates the social formation of the colony. These squires were not to any extent landlords in the English sense. They had no substantial following of tenantry, but cultivated their own estates with both black and white labour. Between the larger estates again were numerous yeomen freeholders of various grades, and below them was a class of labouring landless whites. This social system with modifications lasted till the abolition of slavery and the Civil War.

Into such a society was Patrick Henry born. In his earlier years he seems to have had a positive hatred for study. Many of the Virginian planters' sons in those days went to Oxford and Cambridge, more perhaps to William and Mary College, the Southern Harvard of that period; numbers however depended on the local clergyman or any other rural dominie that happened to be within reach. Henry's uncle was rector of Hanover parish church, and his father seems also to have been a well-educated man. Both of these took the unpromising youth in hand without any apparent effect whatever. He was both idle and boisterous, passionately fond of shooting and fishing and the company of his inferiors. How much Latin and Greek his fond relations and preceptors succeeded in drumming into the embryo patriot and orator is to this day a question for keen discussion among American critics and historians to whom his personality is a matter of undying interest. It was sufficient at any rate to save the marvellous eloquence he later on developed from uncouthness or vulgarity.

At fifteen he was a wastrel and an idler, a reputed hater of books and work, a loud-tongued joker at the village tavern. But he was also a dreamer with strong sylvan tastes, and could endure solitude and his own company for days together in the woods, which was in his favour.

At sixteen the unpromising Patrick was started in the somewhat humble business of a country store; and to make disaster more certain his elder brother was associated with him, who, so far as possessing the elements for commercial success went, was a more hopeless case than even Patrick himself. In the face of the existing social constitution of Virginia this career seems at first sight a strange one for the young Henrys. The general ideas however, even in England, regarding the attitude of land to trade in the past sound strange when the slightest investigation reveals to what humble pursuits the country squires of those days apprenticed their superfluous progeny. However that may be, in a year the Henrys' business collapsed, and the younger brother seized the inauspicious occasion to get married to a young woman as impecunious as himself and of a lower degree. There seems, however, to have been no quarrel between the families, for the parents combined to settle this hapless couple on a small farm stocked with half-a-dozen negroes. The farm failed as completely as the shop. In two years he was forced to give up the business and sell off both stock and negroes. With what little remained from the wreck the feckless youth once more essayed store-keeping. This latter trade was in one sense more congenial to his cast of mind. The store in the rural South, then as now, was the rustic *rendezvous*; and all evidence agrees that if Henry was not smart in his dealings he was at least thoroughly at home lolling with his long legs on the counter cracking jokes with the common folk, gossiping on the latest fox-hunt, or anxiously inquiring for the freshest sign of deer or turkey.

He had by this time several children, but the collapse of his second mercantile venture and consequent destitution seemed in no way to oppress his spirits. He still appeared to move in local society. Jefferson has left a record of his first meeting with the obscure, broken-down, young squireen. The former was then a youth at college, and was spending the Christmas holidays at the house of a local magnate, Colonel Dandridge. He recalls Henry on this occasion. "As insolvent but showing no sign of care, passionately fond of dancing, music, and pleantry, and with something of coarseness in his manners."

Thousands of British troops had by this time been in America. Virginians upon many fields had fought and fallen by their side. A glorious peace had been made; France, the traditional bugbear of the Saxon colonist, had been swept from his path, and the road of Western conquest had been opened. It is always said in America that the arrogance of the large bodies of British troops, whose presence in the Colonies had been made necessary by the French wars, had sowed the first seeds of discontent with the mother country. Among the jolly squires of Virginia, however, there could have been little cause for any such soreness, and if ever the Virginian heart swelled with loyalty and imperial pride, the year 1759 should have witnessed the fulness of such emotions. In his twenty-fourth year, and in the face of not unmerited ridicule, Henry decided to try the profession of law, and after a few months' study mounted his horse and rode to Williamsburg, the capital of the colony, to qualify and procure his license. The examiners were amazed by his audacious ignorance of law and uncouth appearance. John Randolph, however, then King's Attorney-General, was struck by the raw lad in spite of these disadvantages, and procured a license for him, dismissing him with the remark, "If your industry is only half equal to your genius I augur that you will do well, and become an or-

nament and an honour to your profession."

Three years of obscurity ensued. Jefferson, who is always prejudiced and inaccurate, and had the not unnatural jealousy of a scholar and a man of the world for the clownish education of his great rival, said in his old age many bitter things about the latter which have been proved pure fabrications. Among other long credited stories about Henry, directly traceable to the Voltairian President, is one to the effect that the young Hanover lawyer remained briefless for three years. This would not have been surprising; but as a matter of fact his fee-books have recently come to light and show entries in that short period for one thousand one hundred and eighty-seven cases! His ignorance of law at that time only proves what natural powers of eloquence he must have had to show such a record. Whether from natural tastes or from policy Henry posed from the first as a "people's man." He could be a gentleman both in speech and manner when he chose, but at this time he more frequently made use of the vernacular picked up across his store-counter or among the hunters in the woods. He had a preference, we are told, for speaking of the earth as the "yearth" and alluding to "man's naiteral parts bein' improved by larnin'." That a very few years later he could make speeches which in style and diction would have done honour to any legislative assembly in the world we have most bulky and substantial evidence. That in the very spot, however, where Henry had been despised as an uncouth wastrel he became so soon in brisk demand as an advocate is a tribute to his genius. Four years later he burst into something more than local fame, and it was in this wise that it came about.

The Church of England was then established in Virginia. Dissenters had only recently been held in any sort of toleration. Tobacco was the one great article of export, and the

basis of all currency. The established clergy, whimsical as it now sounds, were actually paid in the fragrant leaf itself, sixteen thousand pounds being the share of each incumbent. The price then varied greatly, the clergy under a law passed and duly ratified by the King, taking their chance in these fluctuations. In 1758 it had risen to a fancy figure. Upon this the Legislature most unfairly repealed the old law, and evaded by some technicality the necessity for the royal assent. Instead of the actual leaf, worth then sixpence a pound, the unfortunate parsons were compelled to take an equivalent in the depreciated colonial currency at only twopence a pound. In short, their incomes for those years were reduced from £400 to £133 by one fell swoop. A momentary freak of cupidity seems to have tempted the colonial landowners to turn on the established clergy, their natural allies. The parsons, however, meant fighting, and carried their cause to the courts. Among others, the rector of Frederickville parish, one of the well-known Huguenot family of Maury, sued for damages, and his case, being regarded as a precedent, created widespread interest. The initial decisions of the law, and the opinion of counsel, seemed to point to an easy clerical victory. The defendants in despair turned to the youthful Henry, who seems to have been quite unknown outside his own district. The Parson's Cause is a marked and leading episode in the annals of Virginia, and the scene in the old court-house, when the unknown rustic youth faced the whole assemblage of colonial ecclesiastics and suddenly sprang into fame, is a picturesque one. It is one of those local incidents that, coming just before the Revolution, were doubly significant; one of those queer outbursts of popular passion that broke now and then upon the calmness of colonial conservatism, and sent a timid flutter through the hearts of loyal squires who, twenty years later, were in arms

against their King. A jury of the middle class seems to have been procured, and Henry's impassioned declamation against the "grasping clergy" seems to have filled with amazement both friend and foe. The court-house was crammed, and the green outside was covered with a dense crowd from all the surrounding counties. Henry's appearance at all in such a case smacked to many people of assumption. His conduct of it, however, caused a sensation which is still recalled in Virginia. His father was upon the bench of magistrates before him; his uncle, at whose feet the idle stripling had formerly sat, was among the clergy he denounced with such fierce invective. His speech lasted an hour. It electrified the whole audience, and caused the jury to forget every consideration of decency and return a verdict, without retiring, of one penny damages; it sent the whole colony of Virginia into a hubbub of excitement; and above all it sounded the first note of that extraordinary and magnetic sway which Henry, more than any American orator that has ever lived, exercised over those within reach of his voice.

After this triumph Hanover County became too small a field for the popular advocate. The colonial capital was then Williamsburg. Hither were dragged, over roads to this day infamous, in lumbering coaches piloted by sable coachmen decked in livery and duly impressed with the importance of their several masters, the Virginian aristocracy. At this mimic Court, presided over usually by some discarded courtier, were collected at stated periods for business and pleasure the wit, the wisdom, and the fashion of the Royal and Ancient Colony. To Williamsburg, therefore, Henry as a matter of course drifted, and for some days an ill-dressed rustic hanging about the law-courts and the lobbies of the Parliament Houses excited some comment and much ridicule. Upon the first opportunity, however, which Henry had he turned the ridicule of

the little capital into amazement and admiration. As a natural sequence to his success he had been returned to the Legislature for an inland county. The House of Burgesses was at that time a more or less aristocratic body. Henry, true to the line he had taken up, found therein ample opportunities for denouncing privilege and its abuses. He lashed about him with his flail of a tongue to such effect that he was soon the most dreaded debater in the House.

It was now 1764. The Stamp Act had been threatened, and the Virginian Legislature was greatly occupied with loyal and dutiful remonstrances against its introduction. This was not the kind of work in which Henry shone; and it was not till the Act had become law that he entered on that line of conduct which influenced the future destinies of his country, and indeed of ours, to an extent which it is not easy to estimate. Massachusetts and Virginia were at this time by far the most powerful colonies. Their Legislatures were the pivots on which turned the two sections of colonial America they respectively represented. Even after the passing of the Stamp Act the Virginia Assembly, singularly rich at that time in capable, educated, and even scholarly men, was only mournfully silent. It was evident that a question of incomparably greater importance than anything they had ever before had to decide upon was at issue, and the veteran leaders of the colony, by instinct strongly loyal and conservative, felt that every word spoken should be well weighed. On the twenty-ninth of May the House went into Committee to consider the situation. It was a question which of the colonial chiefs should first venture on a subject from which all responsible men shrank. To the amazement of every one, and the disgust of many, the tall, ungainly, ill-dressed figure of the young firebrand from Hanover County rose to his feet, took possession of the floor, and proceeded to read from the torn fly-leaf of an old law-



book a series of resolutions bearing on the Stamp Act, and of a most advanced type. They may still be read, I believe, in their original pencilled scrawl. They denounced as an enemy to the colony any one who even asserted that the principle which the Stamp Act represented was lawful, and put into definite and public form what men had hitherto hardly dared to whisper among themselves. The debate which followed possesses, owing to its consequences, an importance out of all proportion to its actual surroundings. It lasted for forty-eight hours, and in the course of that time the almost pathetic loyalty of Virginia seems to have been for the first time seriously shaken, and shaken solely by the thunders of Patrick Henry. "Caesar had his Brutus," shouted he; "Charles the First his Cromwell; and George the Third"—(*Treason! Treason!* sounded from the floor and the galleries, while the gaunt young lawyer stood with folded arms and unmoved face)—"may profit by their example. If this be treason, make the most of it."

The resolutions were actually passed by a majority of two. The more aristocratic and conservative party was overborne by the whirlwind of Henry's eloquence. The same day he mounted a lean horse, and with flapping saddlebags and attired in a hunter's costume rode out of Williamsburg towards Hanover County. The worst of the resolutions were expunged, so soon as his back was turned, through the influence of the older party. But they had already been published and found their way through the length and breadth of America. The flame had been kindled and had already risen beyond the power of the Legislature. The unrevised resolutions were printed and read from Georgia to the Hampshire Grants. They sounded treason in all ears, but they embodied the thoughts of thousands and gave them the definite bent which was ere long to develope into action. The Virginia Resolutions may almost be said to have

been sprung upon an astonished Legislature, and carried through it by a burst of irresistible, but no doubt logical eloquence; and these resolutions gave the first great impetus to independence.

Henry in the course of a long and busy life preserved few records of his own doings in writing. On the back however of the famous resolutions he wrote in his last years the following note:—

The within resolutions passed the House of Burgesses in May, 1765. They formed the first opposition to the Stamp Act and the scheme of taxing America by the British Parliament. All the colonies, either through fear or want of opportunity to form an opposition, or from influence of some kind or other, had remained silent. I had been elected burgess shortly before, was young, inexperienced, unacquainted with the forms of the House and the members composing it. Finding the men of weight averse to opposition and the commencement of the tax at hand, and that no person was likely to step forth, I determined to venture; and alone, unadvised and unassisted, on a blank leaf of an old law-book wrote the within. Upon offering them to the House, violent debates ensued, many threats were uttered, and much abuse cast on me by the party for submission. After a long and warm contest, the resolutions passed by a very small majority, perhaps of one or two only. The alarm spread throughout America with astonishing quickness, and the ministerial party were overwhelmed. The great point of resistance to British taxation was universally established in the colonies. This brought on the war, which finally separated the two countries, and gave independence to ours.

From this time forward Henry became the accepted champion of the masses in Virginia. Several generations of a warm climate had made the Southern Englishman a comparatively impressionable and excitable being. Conditions of life favoured the influence of the tongue as against that of the pen. A cultivated minority still looked on Henry as a dangerous demagogue, and jealousy was no doubt a factor in this attitude. Still the young democrat was no rough and uncouth stump-

orator. His speeches are admirable in form and language. Theatrical even beyond the custom of the time he undoubtedly was, and three-fourths of the secret of his almost fabulous influence was due to his manner and delivery. His practice even before this was large ; but from this time forward he had more work offered him than he could possibly accept, and he grew rich rapidly. In 1765 he bought one property from his father, and shortly afterwards another in his old county of Hanover.

From 1765 to 1774 was an anxious period in the Colonies. The thunder-clouds of war were slowly but surely gathering in the sky. The contentious and concentrated democracies of New England discussed loudly the signs of the times, but the movement of opinion in Virginia was less in evidence. Upon the principles of the dispute gentlemen and yeomen, churchmen and dissenters seemed to have made up their minds. All however regarded separation from the mother country as an improbable event, and most contemplated such a possibility with profound dismay. Before the gravity of the situation internal dissensions ceased. In the parlour of the great planter, in the kitchen of the yeoman, in the log-cabin of the hunter, at race-meetings and fairs, at fox-hunts and cock-fights, there was but one topic of conversation. As the clouds darkened and the old kindly feelings weakened, as sharp language went backwards and forwards across the Atlantic, the tension began to show itself, and internal business drew gradually to a standstill. Throughout these years Henry rose steadily in fame and reputation both as a lawyer and a politician. Practising at the highest court of the colony he achieved distinction at a time when Virginia was singularly rich in able lawyers. In the Legislature he exercised absolute sway over the younger and more advanced section, and had secured the respect and even the friendship of the more conservative and aristocratic. Comparative unanimity, determination

coupled with a sincere horror of the calamity such determination might produce, characterised for the most part the people of Virginia during those nine years. No subversive, no socialistic or self-seeking instincts worth mentioning had any part in shaping opinion. The wealthier classes were not only at one with the common people, but were much more responsible for the situation than the latter. They had nothing personal, like the Irish politician of to-day, to gain by resistance to the mother country. There is no question but that they dreaded such an issue, for success seemed so hopeless. At the best they would be left impoverished citizens of a colony too small to stand alone. An American nation was scarcely dreamed of, and in any case such a merging of their colonial individuality would have suggested a lessening rather than an increase of their importance. Defeat on the other hand meant ruin. New England had been born of antipathies to Church and King ; personal inclinations were strong on the side of revolt. But Virginia was the very opposite. Of later years it is true communities of various kinds had arisen in her back territories among whom anti-British feelings might exist or easily ripen ; but such communities were still exotic, and though not voiceless, were uninfluential and out of harmony with the general life and feeling.

Yet resistance, when it did come in Virginia, found exponents and leaders among the wealthy and the educated. On the twenty-fourth of May, 1774, the news of the closing of the port of Boston arrived, and the Virginian Legislature passed a resolution appointing the first of June as " A day of fasting, humiliation and prayer, devoutly to implore the Divine interposition for averting the heavy calamity which threatens destruction to our civil rights and the evils of civil war." As an answer to this the Governor, Lord Dunmore, summoned the House to the Council Chamber and dissolved them with quaint and unceremonious brevity.

The leaders of the House, including the now prominent and influential Henry, retired into continuous and private conference. A well known personage of that time, who was admitted to some of these conferences, has left in writing the following testimony. "He [Henry] is by far the most powerful speaker I ever heard, but eloquence is the smallest part of his merit. He is, in my opinion, the first man upon this continent as well in abilities as in public virtues."

The famous Philadelphia Congress of 1774 was now summoned. The Virginia Convention appointed as its delegates, "The Honourable Peyton Randolph, Esq., Richard Henry Lee, George Washington, Patrick Henry, Richard Bland, Benjamin Harrison, and Edmund Pendleton, Esquires, to represent the Colony in the said Congress."

Patrick Henry, mounted on a better horse, we may suppose, than that on which nine years previously he had ridden out of Williamsburg with the Virginia Resolutions in his pocket, and with doubtless better filled saddle-bags, started for the North in the hot sun of a Virginian August. He broke his journey at Washington's seat, Mount Vernon, and the two men travelled on together.

In the counsels at Philadelphia there is ample evidence that Henry took a prominent part and actively assisted in framing the resolutions there passed. Adams, in a letter to Jefferson on the subject of the Congress, says, "Patrick Henry was the only man who appeared sensible of the precipice, or rather pinnacle on which we stood, and had candour and courage enough to acknowledge it." Henry's crowning work, however, in relation to the attitude of the Colonies was to be achieved at home.

War was now regarded as a possibility; but judging from the private correspondence of that time never did men regard an appeal to arms with such reluctance. Every county in

Virginia was arming volunteers, but as a means to stave off if possible rather than to promote war, which as yet had been only contemplated as a calamity to be averted at every cost except that which the colonists considered to be their liberty and their honour.

On the twentieth of March the second Convention of Virginia was held in the church at Richmond to which allusion has been made as still standing. Patrick Henry alone came to it with his mind made up that war was inevitable. He gave utterance to that conviction in impassioned language which not only brought over the representatives of his own, the most powerful, colony to his way of thinking, but made a profound impression throughout America. The words of this momentous speech have been familiar to generations of American schoolboys, and it has a place entirely its own among patriotic orations. The large gathering of Virginian squires and lawyers on whom the eyes of the other colonies were anxiously fixed came together in a mournfully protesting rather than an aggressive mood. They were determined, but they had a vague dread of what such determination might mean. Henry in their eyes was still something of a demagogue and an upstart, but before the magnetism of his oratory such considerations were soon forgotten. He spoke on this occasion for two hours and when he sat down Virginia was practically in revolt.

This is no time for ceremony [he said]; the question before the House is one of awful moment to this country. For my own part I consider it nothing less than a question of freedom or slavery, and in proportion to the magnitude of the subject ought to be the freedom of the debate. . . . Let us not, I beseech you, deceive ourselves longer. We have done everything that could be done to avert the approaching storm. We have petitioned, we have remonstrated, we have supplicated, we have prostrated ourselves before the Throne and have implored its interposition to arrest the tyrannical hands of the Ministry

and Parliament. Our petitions have been slighted, our supplications have been disregarded, and we have been spurned with contempt from the foot of the Throne. . . . In vain after these things may we indulge the fond hope of peace and reconciliation. There is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be free, if we mean to preserve inviolate the inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending, if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged we must fight; Sir, I repeat it, we must fight. An appeal to arms and the God of Hosts is all that is left us. . . . The battle is not to the strong, but to the vigilant, the active, and the brave. Besides, Sir, we have no election! There is no retreat but in submission and slavery. Our chains are forged! Their clanking may be heard upon the plains of Boston. The war is inevitable, and let it come; I repeat, Sir, let it come! Gentlemen may cry peace, but there is no peace. Why stand we here idle? What is it we wish, what would we have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take, but as for me!—give me liberty, or give me death!

The effect of this famous speech with its impassioned peroration, was great and far reaching. Henry in his manner of delivery exceeded every former effort, and completely carried his whole audience with him. When he sat down Virginia, as I have said, was practically in revolt, and Virginian influence was then immense.

Here Henry's career, in an international sense, may be said to cease. Individually, however, his life, which was ever an active one in his own country, is full of interest to the end. In the first burst of enthusiasm Henry, like most men of his type burning to distinguish himself in the field, was made by his grateful countrymen commander-in-chief of the Virginian levies, and actually headed one expedition by which the peace was first broken. But the jealous professional spirit, of which after the long French and Indian wars there was much in the Colonies, soon sent the impetuous orator back to his own

sphere of the council-chamber. The latter part of Henry's life, though passed in a less public atmosphere, increases one's respect for him, and shows him to have been no self-seeking demagogue nor reckless agitator. Like many popular advocates of advanced views, he grew more conservative with increasing years. He was an active legislator for Virginia throughout the war, and was for ten years Governor of his native State, leaving that office a much poorer man than he entered it; so much so indeed that he had no option but to return again to the practice of law. The highest offices in the United States were within his reach. The Treasury at one time was pressed upon him, at another the Embassy to France; but whatever his ambitions may have been in earlier life, his riper years seem to have been absolutely free from all desire of political advancement. In the heat of the great struggle he was the first to speak of himself as "no longer a Virginian but an American." Yet in the peaceful chaos that followed, and in the face of the Federation schemes that lit again the embers of provincial patriotism and faction, he became again a Virginian in something of the old sense. If Virginia was in jeopardy he grudged no expenditure of time and energy, and looked for no reward. When the Constitution of the United States came before the people of Virginia for ratification. Henry opposed it with all the weight of his power and talents, throwing himself with tireless energy into the struggle. Though opposed in this particular to Washington, he never lost his friendship; but with Hamilton, the great Federalist, he had little in common, and regarded him with profound distrust. When the Constitution had once become law, however, it will ever be to Henry's credit that there was no one in Virginia who so unsparingly denounced those of its enemies who, from spite and disappointment, endeavoured to obstruct its working. His sense of equity was

also well illustrated when the question of the British debts and treatment of Tories came on after the war. No one had been so forward in urging opposition to the mother country ; but few in Virginia, when the strife was over, were so active in urging fair treatment to those of their countrymen whose opinions or bad fortune had brought them into conflict with their former neighbours. One could well imagine that popularity had become as the very breath of his nostrils to a man of Henry's peculiar position. But he knowingly risked and actually lost much of this in later life by an outspoken championship of what he conceived to be right and just. He died with the last year of the century, broken in health, though not much over middle age. He had grown rich in landed estate, not so much from his later law-practice as from his judicious purchases, and general capacity for business which seems to have entirely belied the incompetency of his youth. Men who knew him at the close of his life bear witness to his singular modesty regarding the talents which had made him famous. Whatever vanity or egotism was in his nature showed itself singularly enough in a desire to be thought a good judge of land and stock and a competent administrator of rural affairs.

Henry died at his principal residence perched upon that high ridge of red hills beneath which the turgid waters of the Staunton river tumble and sweep through low-lying corn fields towards the Carolina line. Here, in patriarchal Virginian fashion, no longer fit for an active life, Henry sat in a

chair upon his lawn watching and directing his negroes in the broad flats below. Tradition says that the marvellous voice which more strenuously and effectively than any other upon the continent had thundered against King George in former days, stood the old orator in good stead in the peaceful pursuits of his declining years.

The brevity with which I have treated in this paper the last twenty years of Henry's life needs, perhaps, some explanation. Among his own countrymen every detail of the career of such a familiar historical figure is of undying interest ; but to the notice of most English readers Patrick Henry comes, I think, but as a shadowy name. His life can be divided into two distinct periods. The first has an international interest, and consists of the almost magical transformation of the despised clown, through a series of dramatic situations, to a leading figure and potent factor in one of the greatest struggles in English history. In the second his activity ceases to have any international significance, and is reduced by the march of events to a purely provincial and domestic stage. The former, as a subject of interest to Englishmen, needs no apology. The latter would only be welcome where some sympathy with the personality of Henry, and the conditions of the Southern Colonies after the war, had been awakened. Lastly, within so limited a space I could only dwell in detail on the last at the expense of the first, the more dramatic and the more important.

A. G. BRADLEY.



## HAMLET AND THE MODERN STAGE.

"It may seem a paradox, but I cannot help being of opinion that the plays of Shakespeare are less calculated for performance on a stage than those of any other dramatist whatever." This passage probably recurs to most who remember Lamb's essay *On the Tragedies of Shakespeare*, as they wait for the curtain to rise on one of the great plays. They will recall it of course in various moods. Some will cheerfully anticipate one more triumphant refutation of what they have grown accustomed to call "Lamb's paradox" (a title which he indeed anticipated for it); some will half-heartedly hope to find their wavering faith at last established even at Lamb's expense; some will resignedly settle themselves to witness yet another complete vindication of his judgment. But to almost all who have once read them will the words recur.

Nothing perhaps that has ever been written on the purpose of playing has been so much criticized as this essay, and perhaps nothing so adversely criticized. That the actors should have always been against it is not surprising. They have naturally regarded it solely from their point of view; and it would be unreasonable to expect them to impartially consider, much less to acquiesce in, a theory which runs counter to the most cherished traditions of their profession. But many others, personally disinterested and intellectually capable of appreciating Shakespeare without the assistance of the actor, have equally refused to accept Lamb's verdict. Foremost among them in our time stands Canon Ainger. Lamb, as has been said of Wordsworth, seems to have brought his admirers luck. All who have praised him have praised him well, but none better than Canon

Ainger, who has moreover, as all men know, edited his works with rare judgment, taste, and industry. Yet even he is against Elia on this point. From Canon Ainger's opinions on any subject I should always differ with great caution and (I know that he needs no assurance of this) with the greatest respect. If any one could persuade me that Lamb was wrong, it would be he; and indeed he has undoubtedly laid his unerring, but always gentle, finger on several weak points in the essay. He has shown that it was written with the deliberate intention of making out the worst possible case against the actor; he has shown that much of what is assumed to be the inevitable limitations of acting, is true only of bad acting. Lamb loved the stage dearly; his sympathy with the actor and all his works was keen, his judgment of them sound. Small wonder then that he was provoked to wrath by the contemplation of that monstrous epitaph on Garrick which was suffered in an evil hour to make him and his profession ridiculous for ever on the walls of Westminster Abbey.

To paint fair nature by divine command,  
Her magic pencil in his glowing hand,  
A Shakespeare rose: then to expand his  
fame  
Wide o'er this breathing world, a Garrick  
came.  
Though sunk in death the forms the Poet  
drew,  
The Actor's genius made them breathe  
anew;  
Though like the bard himself, in night  
they lay,  
Immortal Garrick call'd them back to  
day:  
And till Eternity with power sublime  
Shall mark the mortal hour of hoary  
Time,  
Shakespeare and Garrick like twin stars  
shall shine,  
And Earth irradiate with a beam divine.

We have heard something like this in our own day. But an actor may give what laws he likes to his own little senate; it is a very different matter when these laws come to be graven on stone and set up in high places. So far every one must agree with Canon Ainger's objections; but when he says that "the most obvious criticism upon the paper is that it proves too much, and makes all theatrical representations not only superfluous, but actually injurious to the effect of a drama," surely he goes a little too far. To make this conclusion good it would first be necessary to assume that every dramatist was a Shakespeare. It is of the effect produced by theatrical representation on Shakespeare's plays that Lamb writes, and on Shakespeare's only. The whole point of his contention lies in this. It is "their distinguished excellence" that separates them from other plays; "There is so much in them which comes not under the province of acting, with which eye, and tone, and gesture have nothing to do."

It is in this particular sentence that the sting seems to lie for the actor, who appears to consider it a libel on his profession. A certain measure of irritableness is justly conceded to the artistic temperament, and is indeed, one may say, a complement of it. But surely it transcends all reason to demand that the very laws of Nature herself shall be suspended for the actor's sake alone. I have never read that the poets and painters of the world have taken arms against Lessing, who has defined their respective provinces in his *Laocoon*. All human powers have their limitations, and the actor's are bounded not by art but by the resources of humanity. His natural gifts may enable him at moments "to snatch a grace beyond the reach of art"; but art, much as it may improve his natural gifts, vital as it must be to their proper employment, can never raise him beyond their level. Let him be the intellectual mate of Shakespeare himself, it matters nothing. When he comes to

give form and substance to those great creations of the poet's fancy, he cannot break from the common bondage of mortality. What voice and gesture and bearing can do for him, he can do; but he can do no more. It is not possible that any intelligent man can read the greatest of these plays with unbiassed mind and yet maintain that those fine visions (to use Lamb's own words) should lose nothing when materialized and brought down to the standard of flesh and blood.

Most of those who have taken up their parable against this essay have concerned themselves only with a general defence of the actor, and an attempt to remove, or at least to diminish, the limitations that it would place on his art. This was to be expected, for one among many reasons because it is on this side that the attack mainly proceeds. But in so doing they have perhaps rather lost sight of a qualifying clause in the argument. Canon Ainger does not notice it, nor, so far as my memory serves me, do any who have taken the same side with him. Yet it is an extremely important clause, not only as containing the essence of Lamb's contention, but as capable of so much wider significance than he chose to give to it. "It is true," he writes, "that there is no other way of conveying a vast quantity of thought and feeling to a great portion of the audience, who otherwise would never learn it for themselves by reading, and the intellectual acquisition gained this way may, for aught I know, be inestimable; but *I am not arguing that Hamlet should not be acted, but how much Hamlet is made another thing by being acted.*" Let it be granted that Lamb has been sometimes deliberately unjust to the actor; let it be granted that he did not sufficiently care to distinguish between the inevitable limitations of acting and the accidental limitations of bad acting. Will any one refuse to grant that, as matters now stand, Shakespeare's plays are "made another thing by being acted"?

We have been told that it is only "a conceited and feather-headed assumption" to think it possible to appreciate Shakespeare's plays better in reading them than in seeing them acted, "a gross and pitiful delusion," "an affectation of special intellectuality," and I know not what else. These are flourishes on the actor's trumpet at which one may smile without being a villain. No intellectual superiority, so far as I know, is claimed by those who contend that they find themselves in better cue to understand Shakespeare's work in the study than on the stage. Their only claim, as I apprehend it, is that in the book they have his whole work before them, so much of it at least as meddling time has left, and with it have therefore the best chance to "learn his great language, catch his clear accents," as they have come down to us through the centuries from his own lips; whereas on the stage they must be content with so much of them as human voices can compass, with such fragments of those imperial proportions as room can be found for within its narrow limits.

Can this cockpit hold  
The vasty fields of France? Or may we  
cram  
Within this wooden O the very casques  
That did affright the air at Agincourt?

The most triumphant actor cannot surely be blind to the patent fact that Shakespeare's plays as now acted are not the same things that we read. He may of course affirm that they are better things; that is a matter of opinion. The same things they are not, and cannot be.

That there are many reasons why this should be so, no one at all conversant with the conditions of the modern stage and the state of the public taste will need to be told. Nor would it be reasonable in those conditions to complain that it is so. But the fact surely tends to put, at least, a somewhat strange complexion on the assertion still sometimes made that the

genius of Shakespeare can only be rightly estimated in the theatre. *Ex pede Herculem!* We have all heard that there are circumstances in which the part becomes greater than the whole. Are we to assume then that we can only rightly understand and appreciate the whole, let me say, of *Hamlet*, from such portions and parcels of it as the inevitable conditions of the modern stage allow to be used? If those who held this theory held also that Shakespeare, great poet as he is, is not equally great as a playwright, their argument would at least be intelligible. But their contention is the very opposite of this. Shakespeare's consummate stagecraft is the one particular quality which precludes his being rightly appreciated anywhere but on the stage. Yet on the stage the real, the complete Shakespeare is never seen! Surely there is a flaw somewhere in this argument.

Mr. Saintsbury has recently added one more to the many good offices he has already rendered to the literature of criticism by collecting and translating the essays of that accomplished critic, M. Edmond Schérer, on certain English writers both of our own and earlier times. In this volume—so useful for those who are beginning their education in literature and cannot learn too soon that good prose and good criticism can still be written without extravagance, affectation, or obscurity—in this volume, I say, are two essays on Shakespeare, or rather, as it would be more correct to say, on certain theories about Shakespeare, in one of which occurs a passage relevant to the case in point, and which assuredly cannot be called one-sided.

What makes Shakespeare's greatness is his equal excellence in every portion of his art—in style, in character, and in dramatic invention. No one has ever been more skilful in the playwright's craft. The interest begins at the first scene; it never slackens, and you cannot possibly put down the book before finishing it. . . . Hence it is that Shakespeare's pieces are so effective on the stage; they were intended for it, and it is as acted

plays that we must judge them. . . . They might succeed better still if the conditions of representation had not changed so much in the last century. We demand to-day a kind of science illusion to which Shakespeare's theatre does not lend itself—the action shifts too often. . . . the fifth act of *Julius Cæsar* sets before us all the vicissitudes of the battle of Philippi; the fifth act of *Richard the Third* shows us the two rivals encamped and asleep, so near each other that the ghosts are able to speak to each of them by turns. There is no modern stage-management which can overcome such difficulties. Thus it would appear that Shakespeare is destined to be played less and less; but the playwright's cleverness which he displays is not more wasted for that. From it comes the life, the incomparable activity, with which his pieces are endowed no less than in the representation.

M. Schérer might have strengthened his illustrations with the third act of *Antony and Cleopatra*, in which there are eleven changes of scene ranging over a considerable part of the known world: Rome, Syria, Egypt, Greece, backwards and forwards from one country to another. It will be seen that he fully concedes that Shakespeare's plays should be judged, as plays, as primarily intended for the theatre; but the changed condition of theatrical representation must inevitably prevent them being acted as Shakespeare wrote them. They must either be left alone, or acted in some different form from that he designed for them, or our theatres must revert to the pristine simplicity of the Elizabethan stage. This is not a question of opinion; it is a question of simple fact, which has been proved beyond all shadow of doubt to the eyes and understandings of every Victorian playgoer who cares to use either. It is true we do not play such fantastic tricks with him as were played in the last century, when even Garrick could stoop not only to employ Tate's and Cibber's travesties, but even to make one of his own. But has any living Englishman seen one of Shakespeare's plays acted in accordance with the printed text? Some ten

years or so ago indeed an amiable enthusiast persuaded a company of amateurs to exhibit themselves in what he was pleased to call the original or genuine *Hamlet*, after the text of the First Quarto published in 1603. The general opinion, I believe, is not in favour of this theory, holding the text of this edition to be no better than a rough draft, eked out from the memory, or want of memory, of the players. But whatever the relationship of this version may be to the play the world knows as *Hamlet*, the aforesaid exhibition, for all its confident reproduction of the stage and costumes of the time, did not succeed in convincing a somewhat mocking public that they had at last got the genuine Shakespeare. I cannot profess to be an exact historian of our theatre, but I do not think I am far out in the assertion that no one of Shakespeare's plays within this generation at least, if within this century, has ever been acted in exact accordance with the printed text. It is useless, therefore, to argue that Shakespeare's plays, having been written to be acted, can be judged only by being acted, until we bring back the stage for which they were written, and on that stage act them as they were written. What the result of such an experiment might be, it is not now necessary to consider. But until it has been made, the argument has no ground to stand on. The conditions of the Athenian drama were not more different from those of the Elizabethan, than were the conditions of the Elizabethan drama from those of the Victorian. Indeed, it might, perhaps, be no very difficult matter to show more points of similarity between the theatre of Euripides and the theatre of Shakespeare than could be found between the theatre of Shakespeare and the theatre of Mr. Jones.

M. Schérer is not the only French critic who has commented in our time on the essential antagonism between Shakespeare's drama and the modern stage. M. Emile Montégut has gone



still further on this path (*Essais sur la Littérature Anglaise*, 1883), and no Englishman will refuse to listen to the author of what is, I believe, universally allowed to be the best translation of Shakespeare's plays in any tongue. A version of *Macbeth* was being at that time played in Paris with certain omissions and alterations, which the critic acknowledged to have been intelligently and skilfully made. Yet the general impression, not on him alone, but on others who shared his enthusiasm for the English dramatist, was one of disappointment; and he was forced to agree with Goethe that "Shakespeare is too great a poet not to lose much in the theatre."

When you read Shakespeare he is the greatest of poets; when you see his work acted, he is only the first of playwrights. True, the effect is very powerful; so powerful that you forget for the moment the beauty of the language, the prodigious depth and range of the characters, you see only strange and terrible deeds. . . . The tramp of feet, the clash of arms, the tolling of bells, all tend to diminish the beauty of the words, to dull the colour of the imagery. . . . [Yet he urges that Shakespeare's plays should be acted.] But on this condition, that it is clearly understood beforehand what he loses by it, and how inferior in value even is what is left. When one truly knows the great poet, when by reading his works, one has gone through all the poetic and philosophical feelings of the imagination, then it is interesting, and after all right that one should wish to learn what are the purely physical emotions the acted scene can give. But those who know the poet only in the theatre, carry away with them the most false and narrow idea of his work, for they carry away with them, let me say again the idea not of the greatest of poets, but of the greatest of playwrights.

The actor plays in some sort the part of commentator on the poet. And thus M. Montégut's words remind us of that passage from Johnson's Preface, which should be printed in the forefront of every edition of the plays.

Let him that is yet unacquainted with the powers of Shakespeare, and who desires to feel the highest pleasure that the drama

can give, read every play from the first scene to the last with utter negligence of all his commentators. When his fancy is once on the wing, let it not stoop at correction or explanation. When his attention is strongly engaged, let it disdain alike to turn aside to the name of Theobald and of Pope. Let him read on through brightness and obscurity, through integrity and corruption; let him preserve his comprehension of the dialogue and his interest in the fable. And when the pleasures of novelty have ceased, let him attempt exactness, and read the commentators.

But we need not rely on books alone. Fortunately we can call a living witness, and an important one. We have all been to see Mr. Tree's Hamlet, and have all found many qualities to praise in it. Even those who have praised it most coldly have allowed it to be intelligent. It is indeed difficult to conceive a part, out of Shakespeare's or anybody's plays, in which Mr. Tree would be otherwise than intelligent. No more genuine actor treads our stage. He plays every character differently, and the difference, as will often be the case with clever actors, comes not merely from the completeness and variety of his disguises; it comes from within. This is one of the highest accomplishments in the actor's power, and one of the rarest. That it belongs to Mr. Tree every one will acknowledge who saw how marvellously he could transform himself into two such diametrically opposite characters as Beau Austin and the Italian scoundrel Macari in *Called Back*. I saw him play the two parts within the space of a few days, and never have I seen a more marvellous transformation.

But after all no actor, who was worth anything, could fail to be intelligent as Hamlet. He has but to master the text—so much of it, at least, as he is permitted to speak—and to pronounce it distinctly. He has, in short, but to be intelligible to be intelligent. Mr. Tree was much more than this. For one thing,—an essential but not an inevitable thing—his Hamlet was a courtly and well-bred gentleman.



Lamb, if in the vein in which he wrote his essay, would perhaps have thought that he was something too intolerant in his scorn of Polonius in the second act, and that in the third he rated Ophelia too roundly. But it must be remembered that both these actions are a part of his assumed character. It is the real Hamlet who says to the player, "Follow that lord, and look you mock him not," an injunction into which Mr. Tree threw a proper tone of courtesy and good feeling. A more valid objection might be made to the attitude in which he composes the speech which is to "catch the conscience of the King," squatting down in the firelight after a slightly grotesque fashion. But on the whole the general verdict must be that this Prince of Denmark was a gentleman. He has been called monotonous, but it is not easy to see how the shorn and parcelled Hamlet of our theatre can be otherwise than monotonous. He can be loud when he scolds Ophelia; he can tear his passion to tatters at the close of the play-scene when he sinks on the seat from which the King has just fled "frighted with false fire"; he can carry it in the true Ercles' vein when he matches his grief with Laertes over the open grave. But a character of sentiment rather than action, infirm of purpose, vacillating, dilatory, must inevitably increase its natural bent to monotony when presented under conditions which preclude it from showing the principal efforts it makes to throw off its native irresolution, and conceal moreover the chief causes which at last drive that irresolution into action. Some part of this objection moreover may arise from Mr. Tree's inability to speak blank verse. He is always distinct: his pronunciation is always clear and unaffected; but he has not mastered the rhythm or the cadence of Shakespeare's iambics. The prose is always well delivered, with good understanding, enunciation, and emphasis. So much one would have looked for from Mr. Tree; to look for an equally

perfect delivery of the poetry would perhaps have been unreasonable. His training has hardly lain this way, and the gift will not come by instinct alone. Let it be accounted then for his misfortune rather than his fault. Yet it is indeed a misfortune, the one signal defect, in my poor judgment, of an excellent performance. And here one could not but note how much after all there is in a name. How admirably did Mr. Kemble speak Polonius' famous speech. True, the lines put in his mouth have not the high quality of Hamlet's famous soliloquies.

Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,  
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not  
gandy;  
For the apparel oft proclaims the man.

To speak such lines well is one thing;  
it is another and a very different thing  
to master all the solemn music, the in-  
tolerable pathos of these:

But that the dread of something after  
death,  
The undiscover'd country from whose  
bourn  
No traveller returns.

Yet this detracts no jot from Mr. Kemble's praise. What it was his business to do could not have been done better.

*Hamlet* is a long play; unless one followed the actors book in hand, or was blessed with Macaulay's memory, it would be hard to say precisely how much has been cut out of it at the Haymarket. But much has certainly gone. As plays are now set upon the stage much had to go. Even on this fragment of *Hamlet* the curtain did not fall till close upon midnight. How much of it is likely to be left if Mr. Herkomer's theories of scenic art are pushed into practice, is matter for reflection. At a recent sitting of the Labour Commission a representative of the Dockers' Union was examined on his views of the Eight Hours' Day. He opined that it would absorb all the unemployed. But, he was asked, if he found that in a few

years a fresh crop of unemployed had sprung up, would he advocate a further reduction in the hours of labour? Undoubtedly, he answered. At this rate we should soon be in the blessed enjoyment of a No Hours' Day. It seems not impossible that under Mr. Herkomer's rule the actor's occupation would vanish altogether, and we should sit in our stalls merely to applaud the scene-painter and the carpenter; to be sure they already play the most important parts at some of our theatres. It must be said, however, that Mr. Tree pushes this concession to the popular taste (as it is called, though perhaps not always truly called) much less extravagantly than some of his fellows. He has followed the advice of Polonius and been rich, not gaudy, in his decorations. His stage is not over-burdened with that Asiatic pomp through which the actors move as "a rivulet of text meanders through a meadow of margin." His scenes are in good keeping and sufficient. One of them is especially striking. I do not remember to have ever seen upon the stage a more effective picture than the scene on the ramparts where Hamlet holds his colloquy with the Ghost.

Yet for all Mr. Tree's good sense and moderation he was inevitably forced to make his choice between Shakespeare and the scene-painter, and as usual Shakespeare had to go to the wall. And here we are brought face to face with Lamb's contention: "I am not arguing that *Hamlet* should not be acted, but how much *Hamlet* is made another thing by being acted." It is true that Lamb did not press that side of it which to me seems at the present time most significant. He only incidentally touched on it by reprobating the "ribald trash" which Dryden, Cibber, Tate, and others had foisted into Shakespeare. Still the side is there, and it should not be ignored. We have, it is true, cleared away the "ribald trash." But how much of the true Shakespeare has gone with it?

Of all the plays *Hamlet* suffers most by this paring and shaping process. In others we may lose some beautiful passages of poetry, some amusing sallies of humour, some exquisite touches of human nature. But in *Hamlet* it appears to have been ordained by the traditions of the modern stage that we shall lose the very parts essential to complete, as one may say, the incompleteness of the character. From the version now played at the Haymarket, and in all the versions that I can remember, the fourth scene of the fourth act has been cut out. Yet this scene is really more vital to the right understanding of Hamlet's character than any other in the play; it is hardly an exaggeration to say that the famous soliloquies in the first three acts might go with less loss to it than the soliloquy which closes this scene. It is the one which shows him most conscious of his own weakness, taxing himself with it, trying to reason himself out of it, trying to screw his courage to the sticking-place, and yet still content to drift on the tide of events, still consoling himself with the thought that the man shall be ready when the moment comes, still doing nothing to help that moment on.

While on his way to take ship for England, Hamlet meets Fortinbras at the head of the Norwegian army. He asks of one of the captains whose powers they are and against whom they march, and learns that they go to fight for sheer honour's sake against Poland for a little patch of ground not worth five ducats. The Pole, he says, will surely never fight for such a straw, and is told that they are already in arms. Then, when once more alone, he breaks forth—

How all occasions do inform against me,  
And spur my dull revenge! What is a  
man,  
If his chief good and market of his time  
Be but to sleep and feed? A beast, no  
more.  
Sure, he that made us with such large  
discourse,  
Looking before and after, gave us not

That capability and god-like reason  
 To fust in us unused. Now whether it be  
 Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple  
 Of thinking too precisely on the event,  
 A thought which, quarter'd, hath but one  
 part wisdom  
 And ever three parts coward, I do not  
 know  
 Why yet I live to say "This thing's to  
 do ;"  
 Sith I have cause and will and strength  
 and means  
 To do't. Examples gross as earth exhort  
 me :  
 Witness this army of such mass and  
 charge  
 Led by a delicate and tender prince,  
 Whose spirit with divine ambition puff'd  
 Makes mouths at the invisible event,  
 Expressing what is mortal and unsure  
 To all that fortune, death, and danger  
 dare,  
 Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be  
 great  
 Is not to stir without great argument,  
 But greatly to find quarrel in a straw  
 When honour's at the stake. How stand I  
 then,  
 That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,  
 Excitements of my reason and my blood,  
 And let all sleep? While, to my shame,  
 I see  
 The imminent death of twenty thousand  
 men,  
 That, for a fantasy and trick of fame,  
 Go to their graves like beds, fight for a  
 plot  
 Whereon the numbers cannot try the  
 cause,  
 Which is not tomb enough and continent  
 To hide the slain? O, from this time  
 forth,  
 My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing  
 worth!

And yet they are worth nothing. It  
 is not till (his "fears forgetting  
 manners") he breaks the seal of his  
 companions' commission and learns  
 the King's intended treachery against  
 himself, that he takes action. Even  
 then it is only by a fortuitous con-  
 course of circumstances, in which he  
 has no hand, that the opportunity for  
 action comes. All this, too, disappears  
 from our stage-versions of the play ;  
 it disappears at least from Mr. Tree's  
 version. By removing the second scene  
 of the fifth act, in which Hamlet ex-  
 plains to Horatio what has passed

during his brief voyage, and appeals to  
 him whether the cup of the King's trea-  
 chery be not now full, the unfortunate  
 spectator, who has been commanded to  
 discard what the text might teach  
 him in favour of its interpretation as  
 "developed in hundreds of years by  
 the members of a studious and enthu-  
 siastic profession," is plunged yet  
 deeper into darkness. It once fell to  
 Matthew Arnold's lot, in his character  
 of "An Old Playgoer," to review a  
 performance of *Hamlet*. He found it  
 "a tantalizing and ineffective play,"  
 its opening "simple and admirable,"  
 but—"The rest is puzzle!" Puzzle  
 indeed, when treated in this fashion.  
 Shakespeare conceived this play, so  
 thought Mr. Arnold,—

With his mind running on Montaigne,  
 and placed its action and its hero in Mon-  
 taigne's atmosphere and world. What is  
 that world? It is the world of man  
 viewed as a being *ondoyant et divers*,  
 balancing and indeterminate, the plaything  
 of cross motives and shifting impulses,  
 swayed by a thousand subtle influences,  
 physiological and pathological. Certainly  
 the action and hero of the original Hamlet-  
 story are not such as to compel the poet  
 to place them in this world and no other ;  
 but they admit of being placed there,  
 Shakespeare resolved to place them there,  
 and they lent themselves to his resolve.  
 The resolve once taken to place the action  
 in this world of problem became bright-  
 ened by all the force of Shakespeare's  
 faculties, of Shakespeare's subtlety. *Hamlet*  
 thus comes to be not a drama followed  
 with perfect comprehension and pro-  
 foundest emotion, which is the ideal for  
 tragedy, but a problem soliciting inter-  
 pretation and solution.

*Hamlet* has indeed not the stability  
 and coherence of *Othello* or *Macbeth*.  
 It has too much of reflection, too little  
 of action. Even when carefully read  
 there is something wanting. The  
 reader feels the force of Mr. Arnold's  
 words that it is rather a problem to be  
 solved than a drama to be followed ;  
 and the problem, being, in fact, man's  
 relations to the world in which he is  
 placed, can never be finally solved.  
 A tantalizing play it must always  
 then in some sort be even to the

reader, yet surely not ineffective. Its ineffectiveness comes when we see it played in fragments. The character of Hamlet is the play. When that character is shown incompletely by omitting the parts most essential to its understanding, the play must necessarily remain ineffective. Our acting versions, in short, come near to realize the old jest of the playbill which, according to Sir Walter, announced the tragedy of *Hamlet* with the character of the Prince of Denmark left out.

The causes which influence a manager's decision in such matters can never be fully known to the spectator. It is only just to Mr. Tree's experience and capacity to suppose that he had reasons which to him at least seemed sufficient for what he has done. At least he has followed tradition, and tradition must always count for much in the theatre. He seems indeed to have departed from it on the first night by speaking the soliloquy I have

quoted, though he spoke it out of its place, somewhere, as I hear, in the third act. But he seems also to have soon repented even of this departure from tradition. It is vain to consider how the play might be shortened more judiciously. Polonius' speech to his son, Hamlet's counsel to the players—these are less relevant to the evolution of the piece than the scenes now omitted. Yet who would wish them away? The mad scene,—profoundly painful always on the stage, however well played, — was perhaps somewhat needlessly prolonged. But its curtailment, its omission even, would give but small relief. The truth remains that the play, to be acted at all under the present conditions of our theatre, cannot be acted as Shakespeare wrote it. Is it then a paradox to argue "how much *Hamlet* is made another thing by being acted?"

MOWBRAY MORRIS.

## UP THE GERSCHNI ALP.

## I.

THIS is the way that you must go.  
 Where no stray sunbeam, slantwise thrown,  
 The twilight gilds with vaporous glow,  
 Through woods dim, dreamlike, hushed and lone,  
 The pathway serpents to and fro.  
 Fair is the green roof overhead  
 Which rises with you as you rise,  
 And green upon the slope that lies  
 Above you and beneath is spread  
 A fairy tangle, ivy, fern,  
 Seedlings, and mosses of untold  
 Luxuriance flaming into gold.  
 And sometimes at the zigzag's turn  
 A wayside shrine in miniature,  
 Picture or image blest, behind  
 A rusted grating niched you find.  
 The monks of Engelberg would lure  
 Your vagrant thoughts to Paradise;  
 And, sure, not far from here it lies.  
 And now some lucent streamlet's gush  
 Into its brimming trough, and now  
 The sudden snapping of a bough,  
 Is all that breaks the breathless hush.

If—if you were not quite alone!  
 The morn, the woods, were twice as sweet  
 If just one other pair of feet  
 Were climbing here beside your own!

## II.

This is the way that you must go.  
 Across the rolling pastures wide,  
 Where Alpine thistles, nestling low,  
 And clustered gentians, in the pride  
 And splendour of their purple, blow;  
 And all the exquisite pure air  
 With tinkling cowbells, chiming clear  
 Their homely chorus to the ear,  
 Is garrulous; and everywhere  
 Riots and laughs the sunshine bold.  
 You loiter at the water-trough  
 And make a mountain toilet, doff  
 Your hat and dip your face, and hold



Your inside wrist upturned to meet  
 The crystal, cool, refreshing flow  
 That gurgles from the pipe, and so  
 Through all your veins allay the heat.  
 Then, strenuous, charge the sheer ascent;  
 Which won you pause, elate though spent.  
 Deep, deep lies Engelberg! but note—  
 Titlis, that wears his hood of snow  
 In one great wimple on his brow,  
 Soars for your toil scarce less remote.

If—if some other paused here too!  
 How fair these summits and these skies,  
 If just one other pair of eyes  
 Were gazing at them now with you!

## III.

This is the way that you must go.  
 The torrent with the iris sheen,  
 Faint where its thunderous waters grow  
 A sleeping foam-mist, to be seen  
 Spanning its base a vivid bow,  
 Must not deflect your steps, nor yet  
 The lakelet in the mountain's lap;  
 Nor the white hostel, as might hap,  
 Tempt them to tarry and forget.  
 A summit nearer heaven than this  
 Invites you. Up! Each height attained  
 Shows one yet loftier to be gained;  
 Till lo! a reeling precipice,  
 Whence—if your sight with space can cope—  
 As on a cloud the lake of all  
 The four Cantons mapped faint and small.  
 Here, on the green and sunny slope  
 Beside the brink, you rest, and bless  
 The gods for all the loveliness  
 Which haunts these solitudes divine;  
 Rest and rejoice!—the day is long,  
 And life is an Olympian song!  
 How pure the snows on Titlis shine!

If—if with rapture not less keen  
 Some other heart exultant swelled!  
 If just one friend of friends beheld  
 The perfect hour, the perfect scene!

E. C.

## HOURS OF LABOUR.

(ORIGINALLY DELIVERED AS A LECTURE.)

A FEW years ago one of several meetings was held at the Mansion House in support of the People's Palace, and Professor Huxley was one of the selected speakers. He had in his medical youth been familiar with a suburb of London, near the Isle of Dogs. It is a dead, monotonous level of poor houses, tenanted by obscure toilers engaged every day in a repeated round of commonplace labour. Since then he had been far and wide about the world, seeing many varieties of aboriginal heathen life; and he said with deliberate distinctness, that he would rather be an uneducated savage, free to roam where he would, than dwell, occupied with continuous and uninteresting work, in that London region, the wearisome dulness of which he could never forget, however much he had seen since.

I cannot recall his exact words, but this was what they said, and they obviously made a deep impression on the large assembly he addressed. I have often remembered them myself, while thinking of the slavery of civilisation, and the lot to which it has consigned so many in this favoured land. No doubt much may be said to mitigate the awfulness of the Professor's sentence. Let alone the influences of religion, there are veins of cultivated interest, and touches of a higher human life to be found under its most degraded conditions. And toil which may seem to some of us miserably dismal and dark, such as that of the miner who spends his working life in low caverns of dirty coal far beneath our feet, has alleviations of which the ignorant savage has no idea. The diggers in the lowest pit have their homes above. Many a one among them is a man of

notable intelligence. He reads his newspaper, and enjoys the consciousness of exercising political rights. He is a citizen, protected by law, and in touch with the social movements of mankind.

Take, indeed, any class, the duration of whose daily labour now provides a question which is one of the prominent signs of our times, and we see, at once, that Professor Huxley's saying is the grim caricature of a reality. In no circumstances would he himself relish the life of a savage. And yet there is a depressing and sombre truth at the bottom of his words. This is nowhere more notable than in the picture of man shown by the Scriptures. Take it as an allegory, if you like, conveying a truth. I am not insisting on the literal historical accuracy of all we find in the Pentateuch. I take the grand lesson that it teaches about the true position of man. Adam, as there represented to us, appears as in conscious communion with God, that is to say, widely unlike what we now understand by the heathen. He then falls from his high estate, and begins the life which stretches on from that time. He enters the era in which we live, presenting the marked contrasts which man exhibits to-day. And the first sentence pronounced on him is that "By the sweat of his face" he should eat bread. "In sorrow shalt thou eat"; he is born to that as the sparks fly upwards. That is the tone in which he and his toil are spoken of throughout the Bible; "Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening." But when later on he receives the great moral laws of God, in that one which refers expressly to the duties of his daily

life, divine provision is made for a break in what would seem to have otherwise threatened a life of wholly unbroken toil. Much is allotted for him to undergo. The sentence runs, "Six days shalt thou labour"; but there is one day out of the seven which God blesses, and that is the day of rest. The necessity of labour is laid upon the human race. Man is herein separated from the residue of the creation. "If any man will not work," says St. Paul, "neither shall he eat." He thus gives utterance to a truth having a far wider application than the conditions of the particular case before him involved. We have a glimpse of a great pervading law.

Far otherwise is it with the living animals around us. "Behold," says Jesus, "the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feedeth them." Few, I imagine, can help being struck by the immunity of what we idly call "the dumb creation" from the burden of toil. They know nothing of its imperative wearisomeness till they are captured and drawn within the influences of civilisation. The beaver makes its dam of clay without the insistent supervision of an architect or foreman of the works; we have no reason to suppose that it knows what it is to be tired; it has no contract to fulfil. The bird, exempt from pressing human directions, is free to build its nest at its own time, and, being in no danger of becoming overworn by fatigue, is at liberty to busy itself with its little sticks and straws and feathers, even on the Sabbath. God has provided that it shall never come to be overworked. Such provision is made for man alone; and also, let it be added, for those animals which man has taken from their natural state to minister to his own needs.

Though we hear an apostle say, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together," and though this profound utterance no doubt points to the

development of a better world in which pain and sorrow shall be no longer needed in the education of the sons of God, the simpler animals, who share the sunshine and products of the earth with us, are seen to employ, or disport, themselves with a freedom from the imperative demands made upon man, and from which only a few are partially exempt. Rich people are able to escape from the cold of our winter by going to the south of France or elsewhere; but the poorest swallow flits to sunny climes so soon as it feels the touch of chill October. The lark, on the busiest working day, sings above the toiling men and horses in the field. I cannot bear to see one in a cage; I think of the psalm, "They that led us away captive required of us then a song, and melody in our heaviness." People who are fond of putting texts about their rooms, might ask themselves how this would read if hung over a prison of those singing birds which are by nature free.

It is in the comparative, or partial resemblance of his way of life to that of the lower animals, that the naked savage, roaming at his will over an uncultivated soil, has suggested a desirable contrast to the toiler fixed, or tied, by civilised obligations to the same monotonous round of lifelong necessitous labour. And though the features of such a comparison may be so exaggerated as to startle us, it at least brings vividly before the mind a picture of that unlovely and wearisome life which is led by many of our fellows.

No doubt there is a necessity for the discharge of dull and commonplace duties. As the old Arab proverb has it, "If I am master, and thou art master, who shall drive the asses?" It is toilsome to make bricks, even with straw. I do not think, however, that people of leisure, who (within recognised limits) get up in the morning when they like, and if they feel indisposed have no difficulty in keeping their beds for a day, always realise

the imperative nature of duties which oblige a man or woman to begin them daily at an early hour, be it light or dark, and, if the frost be sharp, find no fire to greet them when they leave their rooms. In most cases, moreover, a workman has to quit his house as well as his chamber, and, be the weather fair or foul, must be at his post at a certain time. The barn-door has to be opened, and the horses have to be fed. Or the engine of the goods-train has to be made ready, at the risk of the stoker's losing his character or place. The nature of much other out-of-door work, too, enforces punctual and repeated exposure to disagreeable conditions which the man of means evades. If the rain is falling, he simply drives to his office and does not miss the expenditure of a shilling. But if he had looked out of his window at about six o'clock he might have seen men trudging along the wet street on their way to their daily work. When (to take another illustration) a sleeper, warm in his bed, is awakened by a gust of sleet against his chamber window, does he always think of the man at the wheel of a collier beating up the Channel, or how it may be causing all hands to turn up to shorten sail in the middle of the stormy night? Of course all these duties, on shore and afloat, have to be done. They are the accompaniments of civilisation. Unless they were discharged, the necessities of our modern life would be unattended to, and its comforts would be unobtainable. The richest person would have no house to live in, and no coal to burn. The millions in a city would be unfed, and without the wage which brings their daily bread.

We must not be surprised, however, at finding that questions about the hours to be spent in labour by the million are moving thoughtful society and the Legislature. They are being put, not merely by the independent educated who are concerned in these matters, but by the masses (as we call them) themselves. This is, obviously,

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one result of extended elementary education. The labour problem is presenting itself to the labourer in a social and political, no longer in a small personal aspect. He reads and hears that it is drawing keen public attention. It exercises a distinguished Commission, which examines witnesses from all parts of the kingdom, and the result of their inquiries is common property. All may know what is being said.

Meanwhile the workman himself is casting about for some way to alleviate his toil, to shorten its hours. The most intelligent of his class are aware that we have entered an era in which the rude, old-fashioned methods of manual work are being modified or replaced by mechanical appliances. And his attitude of subjection to inevitable labour is being changed.

Some years ago, while staying at San Francisco, I was invited to examine a well-known school in that city. After I had done, I half-idly asked the head-teacher what kind of work the boys were mostly engaged in when their education was over. "Work?" she replied (it was a lady, if you please, not a man). "They don't work; they use their brains." We have not altogether reached this stage of immunity here, and yet this audacious answer to my question was a straw in the social and industrial wind, some puffs of which have been discernible in the atmosphere of this country. Everywhere, more or less, the mind of the workman is being moved with expectation of some change, swift or slow, which shall bring more dignity to labour, and lessen the duration of its personal pressure. We need only study the reports of Trade Congresses, and colonial disquietude, in order to realise that this is one of the signs of the times.

One thing is certain. Manual toil of some sort is sure to survive; there will always be a bottom rung, as well as a top one, to the social ladder. Call them by what name we like, the world makes use of both servants and

masters, and its work has to be done by hands as well as by brains. And the striking of a fair balance between them is a problem of our day, which the Christian, above all, should desire to approach righteously.

In comparing mental with manual labour, however, some contrasts are often slighted or unobserved. We hear people talk of the strains of intellectual effort, the responsibility of direction, and the burden of command. Current experience incessantly furnishes examples which show how true this is. People point to these, and show how their incessant protraction wears men out before their time. And then, somewhat contemptuously, some ask whether the relatively irresponsible work of the day-labourer is to be compared to this. They forget that the exercise of the brain has a special interest of its own. I do not say that a good carpenter does not feel a pleasure in seeing the fabric grow under his hands. The peasant who feeds and drives his master's cattle may often be heard to speak of them as if they were his own. But the real sense of power, guidance, and direction, which gives its special interest, and often prospect of an increase in gain to the directing mind, is mostly denied to the man whose main business is to carry out the orders he receives. It is this which makes the difference between mental and manual labour. The brain-worker, too, is seldom subject to the monotonous compulsion, and punctually recurrent demands upon his time, which the hand-worker must almost inevitably feel. This, indeed, is indicated by the most prominent feature which the labour question is now showing. It is the duration, rather than the nature, of manual toil which at present exercises the working man. And we know that for the discharge of some duties, his desire takes a definite shape. The cry, in some trades, is for a working day of eight hours. All, indeed, admit that there are some posts the duties of which cannot allow of their discharge being

thus limited. But the chief question now is what the hours of labour shall be, and by what means they shall be determined.

Let me first say a word on the latter part of the problem. I agree with those who look on its uniform legislative settlement as endangering that sense of individual responsibility which marks the true grit of a people, and the rights of man. It is probable that in some measure we owe a popular desire for legislative intervention to the system of compulsory education which has prevailed during the last twenty years. The mind of almost every working man has been familiarised with, and accustomed to, the authority of the Government Inspector. The division of his youthful day has been decided by the State. That has settled the hours during which he shall learn, and it is less to be wondered at that he should look to the same authority to settle how long he shall work.

Be this as it may, the labourer is now exercised in defining the hours of labour, either by combined arrangement with his employers, or legal enactment. And the Christian feels that he is gravely called upon to consider the matter in the light of his faith or creed. He is the more conscious that it thus concerns him, as he sees the drift of Christian philanthropy in these days. Nothing, in its way, is more notable than the prevailing desire for recreation of some sort which marks many efforts made by religious persons to better the condition of the working people, especially among the young with whom they have to do. The Polytechnic busies itself in the provision of summer holidays. Bible classes are supplemented by tours in Switzerland and among the Lakes. Not only are free libraries to the fore, but the gymnasium is a feature in the surroundings of a parish church. All this is well, but my point is that this indicates plainly a present and growing desire to mitigate the pressure of daily work. The leisured classes, with their



People's Palaces and recreative institutions of one kind or another, are touched with a feeling that the toil of the many has been too heavy, and that it behoves the philanthropist to lighten it. A sentence has been pronounced on the pressure of the past. Early closing, shorter hours, lighter labour, not only mark the desire of the worker, but the efforts of the kindly Christian.

It is difficult to say how far this benevolence is aided by fashion. There are tides in charity as well as in dress. When a movement has been made in any direction, some people are sure to "fall into it," as we say, simply because it has been made, and they enjoy the sensation of swimming with the stream. And this ductile disposition is not inoperative (so far fortunately) when the end to be obtained is a good one. But the thoughtful Christian, who reads his Bible, might see that this stir about the hours of labour has there a distinctly deep origin, or at least support. I have already referred to the fourth commandment, and there we may perceive that God intervenes, so to speak, in man's division of his time, by setting a limit to that of work. This is desirable for some who would make slaves of themselves for the sake of gain. They rise up early, take no rest, and eat the bread of carefulness with such ardour that it is well for them to be checked, and learn, if it may be, that man does not live by bread alone. But there are more who need to be protected. They are mentioned by name, men-servants, maid-servants, and cattle. And as we realise the drift and tone of these directions, we might see that it is not God's will that men should be left, each one by himself, to settle the limits of labour.

Either by combined agreement or legal enactment we are invited, as it were, to say how long a man shall work. There is no unbroken continuance of toil within its limits involved in the well-known saying of Christ about the twelve hours of the day. He only points out the period during which no night work should be done. Indeed, this saying of His is, indirectly, a protest against its being prolonged. And we find Him bidding His disciples to come apart and rest by daytime, even when good works gave them insufficient leisure.

And now that we live in an air and an age which is relieved by none of that Oriental repose which surely marked the times of the Gospel and the Law, we are the more bidden to see that we interpret rightly the ancient commandment about labour, and perceive the spirit which lay under its letter. Especially is the leisured Christian called to take care lest he treats any protest against long hours of work in an indolent protected attitude; appealing to the exigencies of civilisation as if they were the only measure of the duties which he owes to his less favoured brother, and forgetting that among the things, good and bad, for which we have to give account must be reckoned the concern we feel for, and the attention we give to, his desires or demands for more escape from the pressure of insistent toil than he can individually secure. As we try (as we should) to look at the signs and questions of the times in a Christian light, so, and so only, are we doing our duty towards our neighbour in the sight of God.

HARRY JONES.

## THE UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE.

EVER since the confusion of tongues on the plains of Shinar, or the diffusion of races in the highlands of Iran, the nations of mankind have laboured under the disadvantage of having no medium of communication in the way of a common language. One people has been accustomed to regard the speech of another people as mere gibberish, no less unintelligible than the jabber of an idiot or the twitterings of a swallow.

In early times the "man of two tongues" was looked upon as a phenomenon, useful indeed, but unusual. The Phœnicians were the first, thanks to their trading propensities, to spread a knowledge of their language beyond their own borders, and there can be little doubt that Phœnician, or a corrupt form of it, was pretty widely known along the coasts of the Mediterranean. It is supposed that we owe our word *gorilla* to the Phœnicians; and they most probably gave the Greeks and other nations, and us through them, the groundwork of our alphabets. The sceptre of commerce passed from the Phœnicians to the Greeks, who under Alexander came near to imposing their language upon the whole of the civilised world. We may be pardoned for regretting that they did not succeed; yet to this day Greek is more of a living language than Latin. When Science requires a word for a new invention or a new discovery, she goes instinctively to Greek for it. Nor can the language in which the New Testament is written ever become entirely dead while Christianity endures.

Latin came nearer than Greek to being the language of the world, though not in itself so well adapted for it. In all parts of the Roman Empire Latin was spoken. In most parts it killed the indigenous tongues.

Greek however still maintained an unequal contest with its later rival. When the Roman Empire fell beneath the assaults of barbarians Greek disappeared, and Latin would have done so had it not been for the spiritual supremacy which Rome continued to enjoy as the seat of the Papal power. This preserved Latin as the one common language, so far as there was a common language at all, for two or three centuries more. We see the commanding position it held by the fact that scholars, scientists, jurists, as Casaubon, Linnæus, Grotius, whether English, or Dutch, or Swedish, could not choose but employ it in making their thoughts known to the world. To this day Latin is the most convenient medium for notes on classical authors, and a Poppo or an Orelli is intelligible even to a schoolboy, where a Ritschl or a Brix would be useless. So late an English editor as Shilleto has advocated the retention of Latin as the language at least for critical notes. It is besides so convenient for a commentator to describe a rival's emendation as *putida*, where he could not by any possibility print the corresponding English term "rotten."

There are some who think that Latin can even at this eleventh hour be revived, a colloquial form of Latin, that is to say, and modernized in vocabulary and construction, to serve the purpose of a common language. There is no doubt that Latin has a certain conversational value on the Continent, and among educated men everywhere. Lord Dufferin, if his own account is to be taken literally, was able to arrest the attention of an Icelandic audience with an impromptu after-dinner speech in the most audacious dog-Latin. Within the last few months two newspapers in this so-

called dead language have been started, one a rather heavy and serious print, the *Nuntius Latinus Internationalis*, the other a comic paper, called *Post Prandium*, consisting principally of a reprint of comic cuts from American papers with the jokes translated and explained (!) in Latin.

So much for the dead languages. Before considering the modern European tongues a reference can scarcely be omitted to Arabic, the only Eastern tongue which has obtained a vogue comparable to that of Latin and Greek. Owing to its connection with Islam, one of the greatest religions of the world, Arabic has become the religious and acquired speech of a vast number of human beings. In many parts of the world Arabic is the only basis of education, all learning, human and divine, being summed up in the Koran. To the devout Arab the language of the Koran is incalculably superior to all other languages; but a dispassionate Western critic will hardly concede more than this, that it surpasses all other languages in its vocabulary of abuse.

But Islam is a lost cause, in spite of the reported conversion of English clergymen and ladies in England itself to the creed of the Prophet, and with its fall Arabic will gradually sink back into the obscurity from which its own intrinsic merits could never by themselves have raised it.

There remain then but two competitors for lingual supremacy, English and French, those old rivals. It did indeed seem at one time, for a comparatively brief period, that French would win the day. The struggle began eight hundred years ago, when the French Normans, aided by Fortune and the Pope, won the first move in the momentous game between the two races. England was divided among foreign soldiers, and all that was English was stamped under foot, and, so far as might be, destroyed. It was fondly hoped that thus the English language and the English name were for ever abolished; but from that dark welter

of tyranny and debasement the Saxons by their inherent stamina and vitality triumphantly emerged a united nation.

The revival of English was due in no small measure to that ablest of our kings, Edward I., who, the first monarch since the Conquest with an English name, was also the first to prefer English as the language of the Government and Court. In England French did not indeed yield without a struggle, but it degenerated before long into French of the type of Stratford-atte-Bowe. Though it thus failed to strangle the Saxon speech in its cradle, on the Continent it still had pretty much its own way. It gradually became the language of fashion—"a courtly foreign grace," which all the more civilised among outer barbarians were expected to acquire, or at all events supposed to desire to acquire—and also the language of diplomacy. French has undoubtedly many qualities fitting it for both these purposes. It is sparkling and epigrammatic. In the turning of a compliment, or in the pointing of an insult, it is unapproachable. You can be politer in it, and ruder, than in almost any language. In the hands of diplomacy it forms an almost perfect instrument for making that which is not appear as though it were. Yet no language is clearer, when its purpose is to be clear. But in all the nobler qualities of language, sonorousness of expression, wealth of meaning, adaption to the highest forms of poetry and the deepest outpourings of prayer, it is immeasurably inferior to English.

The *amour-propre* of France was recently hurt by the readiness of the astronomers of the world in taking the meridian of Greenwich as the scientific meridian for the whole world. Let her console herself with the thought that her decimal system, with its jargon of Gallicised Greek, will in all probability force itself on a reluctant world. But the sceptre of language has passed for ever from her grasp, and has become beyond all doubt the heritage of English-speaking

racés. It has recently been estimated that English is spoken by nearly twice as many people as any other European tongue. In this respect French does not even hold second place; German is before it, and Russian.

English is gaining ground fast in many ways. The Continent is overrun with English travellers, and there is scarcely a hotel or a first-rate shop where English, or at least "English as she is spoke," cannot be counted on with certainty. Our countrymen have now little need of that nervous "continental English" which Kinglake so humorously describes. In Germany again English has taken the place of French as the first foreign language to be learnt. In Russia it is the same. Dr. Lansdell, writing in 1883, says that to speak English in Russia and Siberia was becoming more fashionable than to speak French. "On peut," said his informant, winging his shaft against the French Eagle with its own feathers, "on peut oublier maintenant le Français pour apprendre l'Anglais." He further asserts that Russians prefer English to their own language for use in telegrams, as conveying more meaning in few words. Another sign of the times was afforded by the conference respecting Samoa in 1889. The deliberations in that conference were not conducted in French but English, for the sake of the American Commissioners, the German representatives being all able to speak in our tongue.

In uncivilised regions the triumph of English is, needless to say, even more complete. Dr. Blyden, himself a Liberian, tells us that it has everywhere on the coast of Africa driven out all other European languages. Even in the French colony of Gaboon it is asserting itself against French; even in the German Cameroons it divides the honours with German. It has no dangerous rival in Africa except Arabic. Portuguese was the dominant language on the west coast for many years; now English is spoken continuously from Sierra Leone

to the San Pedro River, a distance of over eight hundred miles. The Nile and the Niger and the Great Lakes are already English: the Congo and the Zambesi will most probably end by being so; and it is difficult to see what can prevent our language from becoming the common language of the whole continent.

Omitting all mention of India, where English has spread with unexampled rapidity, Japan is said to be adopting our language wholesale, the sign-boards of the shops being very generally, and the names of towns and villages always, inscribed in English as well as Japanese characters. A recent traveller in Eastern lands affirms to have met many Chinamen, Malays, Arabs, and fellaheen who could speak good English. Even in the northern wilds of Siberia, rarely indeed visited by civilised man, Lieutenant Palander, of the Swedish Expedition of 1878, says that out of more than one thousand natives the crew had met there was not one who did not know a few words of English.

Thus has English been spread over all parts of the Old World by travellers, merchants, and missionaries. For instance, the only foreign language learnt by that most exclusive of all races, the Chinese, is a sort of corrupt English—*pidgin*, or business, English, as it is called. But missionaries have done not a little in China, and much elsewhere, to spread our language, and there are few important nations in the world from which there are not some converts to Christianity who can speak it.

Yet with all this we have not yet mentioned the agency which has done, and will do, the most to make English the universal speech. This agency is of course colonisation, and the agents are English-speaking colonists.

In a hundred years the United States will probably have as many inhabitants as China, and it is not likely that Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the Cape will fall much short of half their total, especially if England be

reckoned with them. Some have indeed been found to maintain that English will not be the language of the whole even of the United States, while others point to the vigorous vitality of the French spoken by the French Canadians, and the recrudescence of Welsh in the British Islands, as hints that languages die hard. But it is impossible to suppose that such considerations can affect the main question. There are already signs that English is becoming the literary language of Europe. Professor Vambéry, a Hungarian, published his autobiography first in an English dress: the Dutch author of the *Sin of Joost Aveling* wrote his novel, *An Old Maid*, in English; and the author of *The Crustacea of Norway*, himself presumably a Norwegian, frankly owns in his advertisement that, to obtain the largest possible circulation for his book, it will be written in the English language.

Not only is English practically certain to become the language of the world, a result which might have been due to accidental circumstances, but it is also by general consent admitted to be the fittest to survive in the struggle. Its composite character renders it especially suitable for an international language. Though its foundation stones, and the mortar that binds the parts together, are pure Anglo-Saxon, yet there is scarcely an important language, classical or modern, which has not furnished its quota to the structure. It has practically no accident, and its syntax is comparatively simple. The only difficulty it presents to a foreigner is its pronunciation, the same syllable being often pronounced in different ways. With respect to its great qualities as a language it will be sufficient to quote the impartial authority of Jacob Grimm, who, after ascribing to it a veritable power of expression such as perhaps never stood at the command of any other language of men, goes on to say: "The English language which by no mere accident

has produced and upborne the greatest and most predominant poet of modern times, may with all right be called a world-language, and like the English people seems destined to prevail with a sway more extensive even than its present over all regions of the globe, for in wealth, good sense, closeness of structure, no other language now spoken deserves to be compared with it."

One question in conclusion suggests itself. Every language that lives on the lips of men gradually changes and departs more and more from its original form. How will this affect a language if spoken over all the world? Even now English is exhibiting the unique spectacle of a language with two parallel but different literatures; Australia will soon add a third, while the spoken speech of America, both in intonation and in vocabulary, is diverging more and more from the original. English people are accused by Americans of speaking their common language with an accent,—the old story of the wolf and the lamb, which will doubtless have the same disastrous ending, disastrous at least for the lamb.

What will happen appears to be this. There will be an international English, that literary English which the invention of printing has secured from any fundamental corruption, though no doubt it will change very gradually; and there will be several separate dialects of English, which in time will become unintelligible to other portions of the English race. In fact what has already happened in China will happen elsewhere. There the written language is understood all over the Empire, but an inhabitant of Canton cannot make himself intelligible to an inhabitant of Peking. However that may be, the speech of Shakespeare and Milton, of Dryden and Swift, of Byron and Wordsworth, will be, in a sense in which no other language has been, the speech of the whole world.

C. R. HAINES.



## THE SCARLET HUNTER.

## A LEGEND OF THE FAR NORTH.

"News out of Egypt!" said the Honourable Just Trafford. "If this is true, it gives a pretty finish to the season. You think it possible, Pierre? It is every man's talk that there isn't a herd of buffaloes in the whole country; but this—eh?"

Pretty Pierre, the Half-Breed, did not answer. He had been watching a man's face for some time; but his eyes were now idly following the smoke of his cigarette as it floated away to the ceiling in fading circles. He seemed to take no interest in Trafford's remarks, nor in the tale that Shangi the Indian had told them; though Shangi and his tale were both sufficiently uncommon to justify attention.

Shon McGann was more impressionable. His eyes swam; his feet shifted nervously with enjoyment; he glanced frequently at his gun in the corner of the hut; he had watched Trafford's face with some anxiety, and accepted the result of the tale with delight. Now his look was occupied with Pierre.

Pierre was a pretty good authority in all matters concerning the prairies and the North. He also had an instinct for detecting veracity, having practised on both sides of the equation. Trafford became impatient, and at last the Half-Breed, conscious that he had tried the temper of his chief so far as was safe, lifted his eyes and, resting them casually on the Indian, replied: "Yes, I know the place. . . . No, I have not been there, but I was told—ah, it was long ago. There is a great valley between hills, the Kimash Hills, the hills of the Mighty Men. The woods are deep and dark; there is but one trail

through them and it is old. On the highest hill is a vast mound. In that mound are the forefathers of a nation that is gone. Yes, as you say, they are dead, and there is none of them alive in the valley,—which is called the White Valley—where the buffalo are. The valley is green in summer, and the snow is not deep in winter; the noses of the buffalo can find the tender grass. The Indian speaks the truth, perhaps. But of the number of buffaloes, one must see. The eye of the red man multiplies."

Trafford looked at Pierre closely. "You seem to know the place very well. It is a long way north where.—ah yes, you said you had never been there; you were told. Who told you?"

The Half-Breed raised his eyebrows slightly as he replied: "I can remember a long time, and my mother, she spoke much and sang many songs at the camp-fires." Then he puffed his cigarette so that the smoke clouded his face for a moment, and went on,— "I think there may be buffaloes."

"It's along the barrel of me gun I wish I was lookin' at thim now," said McGann.

"Eh, you will go?" inquired Pierre of Trafford.

"To have a shot at the only herd of wild buffaloes on the continent! Of course I'll go. I'd go to the North Pole for that. Sport and novelty I came here to see; buffalo-hunting I did not expect! I'm in luck, that's all. We'll start to-morrow morning, if we can get ready, and Shangi here will lead us; eh, Pierre?"

The Half-Breed again was not polite. Instead of replying he sang

almost below his breath the words of a song unfamiliar to his companions, though the Indian's eyes showed a flash of understanding. These were the words :

They ride away with a waking wind,—  
away, away !  
With laughing lip and with jocund mind  
at break of day.  
A rattle of hoofs and a snatch of song,—  
they ride, they ride !  
The plains are wide and the path is long,—  
so long, so wide !

Just Trafford appeared ready to deal with this insolence, for the Half-Breed was after all a servant of his, a paid retainer. He waited, however. Shon saw the difficulty, and at once volunteered a reply. "It's aisy enough to get away in the mornin', but it's a question how far we'll be able to go with the horses. The year is late ; but there's dogs beyand, I suppose, and, bedad, there y' are !"

The Indian spoke slowly: "It is far off. There is no colour yet in the leaf of the larch. The river-hen still swims northward. It is good that we go. There is much buffalo in the White Valley."

Again Trafford looked towards his follower, and again the Half-Breed, as if he were making an effort to remember, sang abstractedly :

They follow, they follow a lonely trail, by  
day, by night,  
By distant sun, and by fire-fly pale, and  
northern light.  
The ride to the Hills of the Mighty Men, so  
swift they go !  
Where buffalo feed in the wilding glen in  
sun and snow.

"Pierre !" said Trafford sharply, "I want an answer to my question."

"*Mais, pardon*, I was thinking . . . well, we can ride until the deep snows come, then we can walk ; and Shanghi, he can get the dogs, maybe, one team of dogs."

"But," was the reply, "one team of dogs will not be enough. We'll bring meat and hides, you know, as well as pemmican. We won't *cache* any

carcasses up there. What would be the use ? We shall have to be back in the Pipi Valley by the spring-time."

"Well," said the Half-Breed with a cold decision, "one team of dogs will be enough ; and we will not *cache*, and we shall be back in the Pipi Valley before the spring, perhaps,"—but this last word was spoken under his breath.

And now the Indian spoke, with his deep voice and dignified manner : "Brothers, it is as I have said,—the trail is lonely and the woods are deep and dark. Since the time when the world was young no white man hath been there save one, and behold sickness fell on him ; the grave was his end. It is a pleasant land, for the gods have blessed it to the Indian for ever. No heathen shall possess it. But you shall see the White Valley and the buffalo. Shanghi will lead, because you have been merciful to him, and have given him to sleep in your wigwam, and to eat of your wild meat. There are dogs in the forest. I have spoken."

Trafford was impressed, and annoyed too. He thought too much sentiment was being squandered on a very practical and sportive thing. He disliked functions ; speech-making was to him a matter for prayer and fasting. The Indian's address was therefore more or less gratuitous, and he hastened to remark : "Thank you, Shanghi ; that's very good, and you've put it poetically. You've turned a shooting-excursion into a medieval romance. But we'll get down to business now, if you please, and make the romance a fact, beautiful enough to send to the *Times* or the *New York Sun*. Let's see, how would they put it in the *Sun* ?—'Extraordinary Discovery—Herd of buffaloes found in the far North by an Englishman and his Franco-Irish Party—Sport for the gods—Exodus of *brules* to White Valley !'—and so on, screeching to the end."

Shon laughed heartily. "The fun of the world is in the thing," he said ; "and a day it would be for a notch on

a stick and a rasp of gin in the throat. And if I get the sight of me eye on a buffalo-ruck, it's down on me knees I'll go, and not for prayin' aither! And here's both hands up for a start in the mornin'!"

Long before noon next day they were well on their way. Trafford could not understand why Pierre was so reserved, and when speaking so ironical. It was noticeable that the Half-Breed watched the Indian closely, that he always rode behind him, that he never drank out of the same cup. The leader set this down to the natural uncertainty of Pierre's disposition. He had grown to like Pierre, as the latter had come in course to respect him. Each was a man of value after his kind. Each also had recognised in the other qualities of force and knowledge having their generation in experiences which had become individuality, subterranean and acute, under a cold surface. It was the mutual recognition of these equivalents that led the two men to mutual trust, only occasionally disturbed as has been shown; though one was regarded as the most fastidious man of his set in London, the fairest-minded of friends, the most comfortable of companions; while the other was an outlaw, a half-heathen, a lover of but one thing in this world,—the joyous god of chance. Pierre was essentially a gamester. He would have extracted satisfaction out of a death-sentence which was contingent on the trumping of an ace. His only honour was the honour of the game.

Now, with all the swelling prairie sloping to the clear horizon, and the breath of a large life in their nostrils, these two men were caught up suddenly, as it were, by the throbbing soul of the North, so that the subterranean life in them awoke and startled them. Trafford conceived that tobacco was the charm with which to exorcise the spirits of the past. Pierre let the game of sensations go on, knowing that they pay themselves out in time. His scheme was the wiser. The other found that fast riding and smoking

were not sufficient. He became surrounded by the ghosts of yesterdays; and at length he gave up striving with them, and let them storm upon him, until a line of pain cut deeply across his forehead, and bitterly and unconsciously he cried aloud, "Hester, ah, Hester!"

But having spoken the spell was broken, and he was aware of the beat of hoofs beside him, and Shangi the Indian looking at him with a half smile. Something in the look thrilled him; it was fantastic, masterful. He wondered that he had not noticed this singular influence before. After all, he was only a savage with cleaner buckskin than his race usually wore. Yet that glow, that power in the face!—was he Pigeon, Blackfoot, Cree blood? Whatever he was, this man had heard the words that broke so painfully from him.

He saw the Indian frame *her* name upon his lips, and then came the words, "Hester, Hester Orval!"

He turned sternly and said, "Who are you? What do you know of Hester Orval?"

The Indian shook his head gravely and replied, "You spoke her name, my brother."

"I spoke one word of her name. You have spoken two."

"One does not know what one speaks. There are words which are as sounds, and words which are as feelings. Those come to the brain through the ear; these to the soul through sign which is more than sound. The Indian hath knowledge, even as the white man; and because his heart is open the trees whisper to him; he reads the language of the grass and the wind, and is taught by the song of the bird, the screech of the hawk, the bark of the fox. And so he comes to know the heart of the man who hath sickness, and calls upon some one, even though it be a weak woman, to cure his sickness; who is bowed low as beside a grave, and would stand upright. Are not my words wise? As the thoughts of a child that dreams,

as the face of the blind, the eye of the beast, or the anxious hand of the poor,—are they not simple and to be understood?"

Just Trafford made no reply. But behind Pierre was singing in the plaintive measure of a chant:

A hunter rideth the herd abreast,  
The Scarlet Hunter from out of the West,  
Whose arrows with points of flame are  
drest,  
Who loveth the beast of the field the best,  
The child and the young bird out of the  
nest,—  
They ride to the hunt no more,—no  
more!

They travelled beyond all bounds of civilisation; beyond the northernmost Indian villages, until the features of the landscape became more rugged and solemn, and at last they paused at a place which the Indian called Misty Mountain, and where, disappearing for an hour, he returned with a team of Eskimo dogs, keen, quick-tempered, and enduring. They had all now recovered from the disturbing sentiments of the first portion of the journey; life was at full tide; the spirit of the hunter was on them.

At length one night they camped in a vast pine grove wrapped in coverlets of snow, and silent as death. Here again Pierre became moody and alert and took no part in the careless chat at the camp-fire led by Shon McGann. The man brooded and looked mysterious. Mystery was not pleasing to Trafford. He had his own secrets, but in the ordinary affairs of life he preferred simplicity. In one of the silences that fell between Shon's attempts to give hilarity to the occasion, there came a rumbling far-off sound, a sound that increased in volume till the earth beneath them responded gently to the vibration. Trafford looked up inquiringly at Pierre, and then at the Indian, who after a moment said slowly: "Above us are the hills of the Mighty Men, beneath us is the White Valley. It is the tramp of buffalo that we hear. A storm is coming, and they go to shelter in the mountains."

The information had come somewhat suddenly, and McGann was the first to recover from the pleasant shock: "It's divil a wink of sleep I'll get this night, with the thought of them below there ripe for slaughter, and the tumble of fight in their beards."

Pierre, with a meaning glance from his half-closed eyes, added: "But it is the old saying of the prairies that you do not shout *dinner* till you have your knife in the loaf. Your knife is not yet in the loaf, Shon McGann."

The boom of the tramping ceased, and now there was a stirring in the snow-clad tree-tops, and a sound as if all the birds of the North were flying overhead. The weather began to moan and the boles of the pines to quake. And then there came war—a trouble out of the North—a wave of the breath of God to show inconsequent man that he who seeks to live by slaughter hath slaughter for his master.

They hung over the fire while the forest cracked round them, and the flame smarted with the flying snow. And now the trees, as if the elements were closing in on them, began to break close by, and one plunged forward towards them. Trafford, to avoid its stroke, stepped quickly aside right into the line of another which he did not see. Pierre sprang forward and swung him clear, but was himself struck senseless by an outreaching branch.

As if satisfied with this achievement, the storm began to subside. When Pierre recovered consciousness Trafford clasped his hand and said, "You've a sharp eye, a quick thought, and a deft arm, comrade."

"Ah, it was in the game. It is good play to assist your partner," the Half-Breed replied sententiously.

Through all the Indian had remained stoical. But McGann, who swore by Trafford—as he had once sworn by another of the Trafford race,—had his heart on his lips, and said:

"There's a swate little cherub that sits up  
aloft,  
Who cares for the soul of poor Jack!"

It was long after midnight ere they settled down again, with the wreck of the forest round them. Only the Indian slept; the others were alert and restless. They were up at day-break, and on their way before sunrise, filled with desire for prey. They had not travelled far before they emerged upon a plateau. Around them were the hills of the Mighty Men—solemn, majestic; at their feet was a vast valley on which the light newly-fallen snow had not hidden all the grass. Lonely and lofty, it was a world waiting chastely to be peopled! And now it was peopled, for there came from a cleft of the hills an army of buffaloes lounging slowly down the waste, with tossing manes and hoofs stirring the snow into a feathery scud.

The eyes of Trafford and McGann swam; Pierre's face was troubled, and strangely enough he made the sign of the cross.

At that instant Trafford saw smoke issuing from a spot on the mountain opposite. He turned to the Indian: "Some one lives there?" he said.

"It is the home of the dead, but life is also there."

"White man, or Indian?"

But no reply came. The Indian pointed instead to the buffalo rumbling down the valley. Trafford forgot the smoke, forgot everything except that splendid quarry. McGann was excited. "Sarpints alive!" he said, "look at the troops of them! Is it standin' here we are with our tongues in our cheeks, whin there's beasts to be killed, and mate to be got, and the call to war on the ground below! Clap spurs with your heels, say I, and down the side of the turf together and give 'em the teeth of our guns!" And the Irishman dashed down the slope. In an instant, all followed, or at least Trafford thought all followed, swinging their guns across their saddles to be ready for this excellent foray. But while Pierre rode hard, it was at first without the fret of battle in him, and he smiled strangely, for he knew that the Indian had disappeared

as they rode down the slope, though how and why he could not tell. There ran through his head tales chanted at camp-fires when he was not yet in stature so high as the loins that bore him. They rode hard, and yet they came no nearer to that flying herd straining on with white streaming breath and the surf of snow rising to their quarters. Mile upon mile, and yet they could not ride these monsters down!

And now Pierre was leading. There was a kind of fury in his face, and he seemed at last to gain on them. But as the herd veered close to a wall of stalwart pines, a horseman issued from the trees and joined the cattle. The horseman was in scarlet from head to foot; and with his coming the herd went faster, and ever faster, until they vanished into the mountain-side; and they who pursued drew in their trembling horses and stared at each other with wonder in their faces.

"In God's name what does it mean?" Trafford cried.

"Is it a trick of the eye or the hand of the devil?" added McGann.

"In the name of God we shall know perhaps. If it is the hand of the devil it is not good for us," remarked Pierre.

"Who was the man in scarlet who came from the woods?" asked Trafford of the Half-Breed.

"Eh, it is strange! There is an old tale among the Indians! My mother told many tales of the place and sang of it, as I sang to you. The legend was this:—In the hills of the North which no white man, nor no Indian of this time hath seen, the forefathers of the red men sleep; but some day they will wake again and go forth and possess all the land; and the buffalo are for them when that time shall come, that they may have the fruits of the chase, and that it be as it was of old, when the cattle were as clouds on the horizon. And it was ordained that one of these mighty men who had never been vanquished in fight, nor done an evil thing, and was



the greatest of all the chiefs, should live and not die, but be as a sentinel, as a lion watching, and preserve the White Valley in peace until his brethren waked and came into their own again. And him they called the Scarlet Hunter; and to this hour the red men pray to him when they lose their way upon the plains, or Death draws aside the curtains of the wigwam to call them forth."

"Repeat the verses you sang, Pierre," said Trafford.

The Half-Breed did so. When he came to the words "Who loveth the beast of the field the best," the Englishman looked round. "Where is Shang?" he said.

McGann shook his head in astonishment and negation. Pierre explained: "On the mountain-side where we ride down he is not seen,—he vanished . . . *mon Dieu*, see!"

On the slope of the mountain stood the Scarlet Hunter with drawn bow. From it an arrow flew over their heads with a sorrowful *twang* and fell where the smoke rose among the pines; then the mystic figure disappeared.

McGann shuddered and drew himself together. "It is the place of spirits," he said; "and it's little I like it, God knows; but I'll follow that Scarlet Hunter, or red devil, or whatever he is, till I drop, if the Honourable gives the word. For flesh and blood I'm not afraid of; and the other we come to, whether we will or not, some day."

But Trafford said: "No, we'll let it stand where it is for the present. Something has played our eyes false, or we're brought here to do work different from buffalo-hunting. Where that arrow fell among the smoke we must go first. Then, as I read the riddle, we travel back the way we came. There are points in connection with the Pipi Valley that are superior to the hills of the Mighty Men."

They rode away across the glade, and through a grove of pines upon a hill, till they stood before a log-hut with parchment windows.

Trafford knocked, but there was no

response. He opened the door and entered. He saw a figure rise painfully from a couch in a corner,—the figure of a woman young and beautiful, but wan and worn. She seemed dazed and inert with suffering, and spoke mournfully: "It is too late. Not you, nor any of your race, nor anything on earth can save him. He is dead, dead now."

At the first sound of her voice Trafford started. He drew near to her, as pale as she was, and wonder and pity were in his face. "Hester," he said, "Hester Orval!"

She stared at him like one that had been awakened from an evil dream, then tottered towards him with the cry, "Just, Just, have you come to save me? O Just!" His distress was sad to see, for it was held in deep repression, but he said calmly and with protecting gentleness: "Yes, I have come to save you. Hester, how is it you are here in this strange place?—you!"

She sobbed so that at first she could not answer; but at last she cried: "O Just, he is dead . . . in there, in there! . . . Last night, it was last night; and he prayed that I might go with him. But I could not die unforgiven,—and I was right, for you have come out of the world to help me, and to save me."

"Yes, to help you and to save you,—if I can," he added in a whisper to himself, for he was full of foreboding. He was of the earth, earthy, and things that had chanced to him this day were beyond the natural and healthy movements of his mind. He had gone forth to slay, and had been foiled by shadows; he had come with a tragic, if beautiful, memory haunting him, and that memory had clothed itself in flesh and stood before him, pitiful, solitary,—a woman. He had scorned all legend and superstition, and here both were made manifest to him. He had thought of this woman as one who was of this world no more, and here she mourned before him and bade him go and look upon her dead, upon the

man who had wronged him, into whom, as he once declared, the soul of a cur had entered,—and now what could he say? He had once carried in his heart the infinite something that is to men the utmost fulness of life, which losing they must carry lead up on their shoulders where they thought the gods had given pinions.

McGann and Pierre were nervous. This conjunction of unusual things was easier to the intelligences of the dead than the quick. The outer air was perhaps less charged with the unnatural, and with a glance towards the room where Death was quartered they left the hut.

Trafford was alone with the woman through whom his life had been turned away. He looked at her searchingly; and as he looked the mere man in him asserted itself for a moment. She was dressed in coarse garments; it struck him that her grief had a touch of commonness about it; there was something imperfect in the dramatic setting. His recent experiences had had a kind of grandeur about them; it was not thus that he had remembered her in the hour when he had called upon her in the plains, and the Indian had heard his cry. He felt, and was ashamed in feeling, that there was a grim humour in the situation. The fantastic, the melodramatic, the emotional were huddled here in too marked a prominence; it all seemed, for an instant, like the tale of a woman's first novel. But immediately again there was roused in him the latent force of loyalty to himself and therefore to her; the story of her past, so far as he knew it, flashed before him, and his eyes smarted.

He remembered the time he had last seen her in an English country-house among a gay party in which Royalty smiled, and the subject was content beneath the smile. But there was one rebellious subject, and her name was Hester Orval. She was a wilful girl who had lived life selfishly within the lines of that decorous yet pleasant convention to which she was born.

She was beautiful,—she knew that, and Royalty had graciously admitted it. She was warm-thoughted, and possessed the fatal strain of the artistic temperament. She was not sure that she had a heart; and many others, not of her sex, after varying and enthusiastic study of the matter were not more confident than she. But it had come at last that she had listened with pensive pleasure to Trafford's tale of love; and because to be worshipped by a man high in all men's, and in most women's, esteem, ministered delicately to her sweet egotism, and because she was proud of him, she gave him her hand in promise, and her cheek in privilege, but denied him,—though he knew this not—her heart and the service of her life. But he was content to wait patiently for that service, and he wholly trusted her, for there was in him some fine spirit of the antique world.

There had come to Falkenstowe, this country house and her father's home, a man who bore a knightly name, but who had no knightly heart; and he told Ulysses' tales and covered a hazardous and cloudy past with that fascinating colour which makes evil appear to be good; so that he roused in her the pulse of art which she believed was soul and life, and her allegiance swerved. And when her mother pleaded with her, and when her father said stern things, and even Royalty with uncommon use rebuked her gently, her heart grew hard; and almost on the eve of her wedding-day she fled with her lover, and married him, and together they sailed away over the seas.

The world was shocked and clamorous for a matter of nine days, and then it forgot this foolish and awkward circumstance; but Just Trafford never forgot it. He remembered all vividly until the hour, a year later, when the London journals announced that Hester Orval and her husband had gone down with a vessel wrecked upon the Alaskan and Canadian coast. And

there new regret began and his knowledge of her ended.

But she and her husband had not been drowned; with a sailor they had reached the shore in safety. They had travelled inland from the coast through the great mountains by unknown paths, and as they travelled the sailor died; and they came at last through innumerable hardships to the Kimash Hills, the hills of the Mighty Men, and there they stayed. It was not an evil land; it had neither deadly cold in winter nor wanton heat in summer. But they never saw a human face, and everything was lonely and spectral. For a time they strove to go eastwards or southwards but the mountains were impassable, and in the north and west there was no hope. Though the buffalo swept by them in the valley they could not slay them, and they lived on forest fruits until in time the man sickened. The woman nursed him faithfully but still he failed; and when she could go forth no more for food, some unseen dweller of the woods brought buffalo meat, and prairie fowl, and water from the spring, and laid them beside her door.

She had seen the mounds upon the hill, the wide couches of the sleepers, and she remembered the things done in the days when God seemed nearer to the sons of men than now; and she said that a spirit had done this thing, and trembled and was thankful. But the man weakened and knew that he should die; and one night when the pain was sharp upon him he prayed bitterly that he might pass, or that help might come to snatch him from the grave. And as they sobbed together a form entered at the door,—a form clothed in scarlet—and he bade them tell the tale of their lives as they would some time tell it unto Heaven. And when the tale was told he said that succour should come to them from the south

by the hand of the Scarlet Hunter, that the nation sleeping there should no more be disturbed by their moaning. And then he had gone forth, and with his going there was a storm such as that in which the man had died,—the storm that had assailed the hunters in the forest yesterday.

This was the second part of Hester Orval's life as she told it to Just Trafford. And he, looking into her eyes, knew that she had suffered, and that she had sounded her husband's unworthiness. Then he turned from her and went into the room where the dead man lay. And there all hardness passed from him and he understood that in the great going-forth man reckons to the full with the deeds done in that brief pilgrimage called life; and that in the bitter journey which this one took across the dread spaces between Here and There he had repented of his sins, because they, and they only, went with him in mocking company; the Good having gone first to plead where Evil is a debtor and hath a prison. And the woman came and stood beside Trafford, and whispered, "At first—and at the last—he was kind."

But he urged her gently from the room: "Go away," he said; "go away. We cannot judge him. Leave me alone with him."

They buried him upon the hill-side, far from the mounds where the Mighty Men waited for their summons to go forth and be the lords of the North again. At night they buried him when the moon was at its full; and he had the fragrant pines for his bed, and the warm darkness to cover him; and though he is to those others resting there a heathen and an alien, it may be that he sleeps peacefully.

When Trafford questioned Hester Orval more deeply of her life there, the unearthly look quickened in her eyes and she said: "Oh, nothing, nothing is real here, but suffering; perhaps it is all a dream, but it has changed me, changed me. To

hear the tread of the flying herds,—to see no being save him,—the Scarlet Hunter—to hear the voices calling in the night! Hush! There, do you not hear them? It is midnight,—listen!”

He listened, and Pierre and Shon McGann looked at each other apprehensively, while Shon's fingers felt hurriedly along the beads of a rosary which he did not hold. Yes, they heard it, a deep sonorous sound: “Is the daybreak come?” “It is still the night,” rose the reply as of one clear voice. And then there floated through the hills more softly: “We sleep—we sleep!” And the sounds echoed through the valley—“sleep—sleep!”

Yet though these things were full of awe, the spirit of the place held them there, and the fever of the hunter descended on them hotly. In the morning they went forth, and rode into the White Valley where the buffalo were feeding, and sought to steal upon them; but the shots from their guns only awoke the hills, and none were slain. And though they rode swiftly, the wide surf of snow was ever between them and the chase, and their striving availed nothing. Day after day they followed that flying column, and night after night they heard the sleepers call from the hills. And the desire of the thing wasted them, and they forgot to eat, and ceased to talk among themselves. But one day Shon McGann, muttering *aves* as he rode, gained on the cattle, until once again the Scarlet Hunter came forth from a cleft of the mountains, and drove the herd forward with swifter feet. But the Irishman had learned the power in this thing, and had taught Trafford, who knew not those availing prayers, and with these sacred conjurations on their lips they gained on the cattle length by length, though the Scarlet Hunter rode abreast of the thundering horde. Within easy range, Trafford swung his gun shoulderwards to fire, but at that instant a cloud of snow rose up between him and his quarry so that they all were blinded. And when they

came into the clear sun again the buffalo were gone; but flaming arrows from some unseen hunter's bow came singing over their heads towards the south; and they obeyed the sign, and went back to where Hester wore her life out with anxiety for them, because she knew the hopelessness of their quest. Women are nearer to the heart of things. And now she begged Trafford to go southwards before winter froze the plains impassably, and the snow made tombs of the valleys. And he gave the word to go, and said that he had done wrong,—for now the spell was falling from him.

But she seeing his regret said: “Ah, Just, it could not have been different. The passion of it was on you as it was on us! As if to teach us that hunger for happiness is robbery, and that the covetous desire of man is not the will of the gods. The herds are for the Mighty Men when they awake, not for the stranger and the Philistine.”

“You have grown wise, Hester,” he replied.

“No, I am sick in brain and body; but it may be that in such sickness there is wisdom.”

“Ah,” he said, “it has turned my head, I think. Once I laughed at all such fanciful things as these. This Scarlet Hunter,—how many times have you seen him?”

“But once.”

“What were his looks?”

“A face pale and strong, with noble eyes; and in his voice there was something strange.”

Trafford thought of Shanghi, the Indian,—where had he gone? He had disappeared as suddenly as he had come to their camp in the South.

As they sat silent in the growing night, the door opened and the Scarlet Hunter stood before them.

“There is food,” he said, “on the threshold,—food for those who go upon a far journey to the South in the morning. Unhappy are they who seek for gold at the rainbow's foot, who chase the fire-fly in the night, who follow the herds in the White Valley.

Wise are they who anger not the gods, and who fly before the rising storm. There is a path from the valley for the strangers, the path by which they came; and when the sun stares forth again upon the world, the way shall be open, and there shall be safety for you until your travel ends in the quick world whither you go. You were foolish; now you are wise. It is time to depart; seek not to return, that we may have peace and you safety. When the world cometh to her spring again we shall meet." Then he turned and was gone, with Trafford's voice ringing after him,—*"Shangi! Shangi!"*

They ran out swiftly but he had vanished. In the valley where the moonlight fell in icy coldness a herd of cattle was moving, and their breath rose like the spray from sea-beaten rocks, and the sound of their breathing was borne upwards to the watchers.

At daybreak they rode down into the valley. All was still. Not a trace of life remained; not a hoof-mark in the snow, nor a bruised blade of grass. And when they climbed to the plateau and looked back, it seemed to Trafford and his companions, as it seemed in after years, that this thing had been all a fantasy. But Hester's face was beside them, and it told of strange and unsubstantial things. The shadows of the middle world were upon her. And yet again, when they turned at the last, there was no token. It was a northern valley with sun and snow, and cold blue shadows, and the high hills,—that was all.

Then Hester said: "O Just, I do not know if this is life or death—and yet it must be death, for after death there is forgiveness to those who

repent, and your face is forgiving and kind."

And he,—for he saw that she needed much human help and comfort—gently laid his hand on hers and replied: "Hester, this is life, a new life for both of us. Whatever has been was a dream; whatever is now,"—and he folded her hand in his—"is real; and there is no such thing as forgiveness to be spoken of between us. There shall be happiness for us yet, please God!"

"I want to go to Falkenstowe. Will,—will mother forgive me?"

"Mothers always forgive, Hester, else half the world had slain itself in shame."

And then she smiled for the first time since he had seen her. This was in the shadows of the scented pines; and a new life breathed upon her, as it breathed upon them all, and they knew that the fever of the White Valley had passed away from them for ever.

After many hardships they came in safety to the regions of the south country again; and the tale they told, though doubted by the race of pale faces, was believed by the heathen; because there was none among them, but, as he swung at his mother's breasts, and from his youth up, had heard the legend of the Scarlet Hunter.

For the romance of that journey, it concerned only the man and woman to whom it was as wine and meat to the starving. Is not love more than legend, and a human heart than all the beasts of the field or any joy of slaughter?

GILBERT PARKER.



## LEAVES FROM A NOTE-BOOK

## OF SOME NEW BOOKS.

## I.

THE simultaneous publication of two separate and apparently rival editions of a course of lectures delivered more than half a century ago is something surely unique in the book-market. The lectures are those delivered by Carlyle on the History of Literature (or, more properly, on the Spiritual Progress of the World as shown in its Literature) in the summer of 1838. They were reported at the time, though of course somewhat scantily, in *The Examiner* and other papers, but a full report was taken in short-hand by one of the audience, Thomas Chisholm Anstey, a clever man, who led an active and versatile, and also a somewhat controversial, career in England, China, and India. These reports he carefully wrote out and preserved, and seems to have made copies of them for some of his friends. On his death at Bombay in 1873, his own manuscript came into the possession of the Royal Asiatic Society in that city. It is from this manuscript that one of these editions has been printed and published by Messrs. Curwen and Kane in Bombay, and at *The Times of India* office in London. The other edition, published by Messrs. Ellis and Elvey of Bond Street, has been printed from a copy of Mr. Anstey's manuscript in their possession and compared with a copy belonging to Mr. Dowden. Mr. Karkaria, who has edited the original manuscript for the Bombay publishers, assumes his to be the only genuine edition, as is the natural way of editors all the world over. I cannot profess to have collated the two volumes; but the ordinary reader will perhaps not be struck by any great dissimilarity.

It is not impossible that Mr. Anstey's manuscript may differ more from the original lectures than the copies differ from the original manuscript. Not that there is any reason to suppose his report a bad one; but amateur short-hand reporters, nor amateurs only, will sometimes make mistakes, and Carlyle for many reasons cannot have been an easy speaker to follow.

Mr. Reay Greene, who has edited the English publication, wonders why Carlyle did not issue these lectures in his lifetime, and thinks the reason to be that he "shrank from the slow labour of preparing for publication discourses which deal with topics demanding careful treatment while almost infinite in their extent and diversity." It may have been so; but another reason is possible. Between the years 1837 and 1840 Carlyle delivered in all four courses of lectures in London: the first was on German Literature; the second, these on the History of Literature; the third on the French Revolution, after the publication of his famous book; the fourth on Heroes. The first and third courses seem by Mr. Froude's account to have been no great things, though they brought in the money that was still sorely needed, and for which alone Carlyle undertook a business that he seems to have cordially detested, and has likened to "a man singing through a fleece of wool." But in the second course he, according to the same authority, "succeeded brilliantly." Yet he never would reprint them, attaching no importance to what he called "a mixture of prophecy and play-acting." There can however be little doubt that he used what he thought best in the three first courses,

and in the second especially, for his last and best-known course on Heroes, the only one that he carefully prepared and wrote out beforehand with intent to make a book of it. Many of the figures reappear; Dante and Shakespeare, Luther and Knox, Johnson and Rousseau, Cromwell and Napoleon. If we compare the form these figures take in the *Lectures on the History of Literature* with the form given to them in the *Lectures on Heroes*, we shall see that the earlier work stands to the later much as the first quarto of *Hamlet* stands to the play we read as Shakespeare's.

Is it not possible that this may have been one of the reasons, if not the chief reason, that kept Carlyle from publishing these lectures in his lifetime? Some might even think it a reason against publishing them now. Of course they show traces of the man. An austere French critic has dubbed Carlyle "a Man of Genius in the shape of a Buffoon." No one would dispute the first part of the proposition; and it would not be difficult out of the thirty volumes or so in which he has preached "the Golden Gospel of Silence" to show at least some ground for the second. Carlyle himself knew that this feeling was in the air. In 1848, when fame and money were both coming, surely if still slowly, he wrote in his journal: "The friendliest reviewers, I can see, regard me as a wonderful athlete, a rope-dancer whose perilous somersets it is worth sixpence (paid into the circulating library) to see; or at most I seem to them a desperate, half mad, if usefullish fireman, rushing along the ridge and tiles in a frightful manner to quench the burning chimney." But at least in all his various moods, serious or mocking, sublime or grotesque, man of genius, buffoon, rope-dancer, or fireman, he was always himself and none other. And even in these lectures, crude and fragmentary as they must have been in their original shape—for who could trace the whole spiritual history of man from the earliest times

to our own through a course of twelve lectures of something under an hour's duration apiece in other than a fragmentary manner?—imperfectly as they may have come down to us, the real Carlyle is still momentarily visible. The "devouring eye and portraying hand," the wonderful qualities of expression that, in Emerson's fine phrase, savour always of eternity, have not yet come; but they are coming, and they cast their shadows before them. The few sentences in which he sketches Johnson and Hume—Johnson, "the great, shaggy, dusty pedagogue" who "must inevitably be regarded as the brother of all honest men"; Hume, "who always knew where to begin and end"—foreshadow the wonderful gallery of portraits (kit-cats only though most of them be) that we find in *Cromwell* and *Frederick*. Nor would it be easy to sum Napoleon up in a single sentence more felicitously than he is summed in this: "Buonaparte himself was a reality at first, but afterwards he turned out all wrong and false,"—a sentence elaborated into several pages in the lecture on the Hero as King, but still containing in less than a score of words the essential fact of the man. On the other hand, there is no lack of those "inarticulate mouthings," those somersets in the face of all order and reason, beyond which many even now find themselves unable to get with Carlyle. We are told that he took especial pains with the Greek and Roman part of these lectures; "I have read Thucydides and Herodotus carefully," he says. Yet he complains that the Greek historians busy themselves only with battles, which does not suggest that they had been very carefully read. And what can be more fatuous—there is really no other word for it—than this judgment on Gibbon? "With all his swagger and bombast, no man ever gave a more futile account of human things than he has done of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire; assigning no profound cause for these phenomena, nothing but diseased nerves, and all

sorts of miserable motives, to the actors in them." If he does not seem to have read Thucydides and Herodotus very carefully, he would seem not to have read Gibbon at all. If ever a man made the causes of things clear it was Gibbon. The reader who cannot find in those six volumes what brought the Roman Empire to ruin must be past the help of man.

This book then adds nothing to our knowledge of Carlyle, nor can alter our opinions in either direction. Without it he would have remained the same figure, neither greater nor less, a grand, rugged, solitary figure, a puzzle in life, a puzzle in death, nor less a puzzle to himself than to the world. Yet nothing that comes direct from the genuine man can ever be uninteresting, though about him and about him there has been now perhaps more than enough. The world could have done without the book; but having got it, let it be welcome as in some sort the voice of a real man, even though of one "singing through wool."

## II.

IN common with perhaps the majority of my countrymen my knowledge of the tenets of the Positive Philosophy is not very clear. Most of us have probably little more than a general idea that so far as the destructive part of it goes there is something to be said for it, but for the constructive part something less. And this after all is the way of most creeds. "Wreckage," said one who certainly should have known, "is swift, rebuilding slow and distant;" but at least he comforted himself with thinking that "Another than us has charge of it." The Positivist holds that this delicate charge is in the hands of man, agreeing with Mr. Swinburne, that he alone is "the master of things," that, in a word, Humanity is the only Supreme Being. Such at least seems to have been the teaching of the founder of the Positivist Philosophy, that Auguste

Comte whom George Henry Lewes (no great philosopher, some think, albeit a historian of Philosophy) proclaimed the Bacon of the nineteenth century, only "more so." The disciples may have gone beyond their master: dogma is the inevitable growth of all religions.

But those who cannot follow the Positivists to their extremest conclusions, and those who are congenitally incapable of understanding them (of whom myself am probably one) may at least unite in enjoying their *Calendar of Great Men*, as put forth, after many years of preparation, by Mr. Frederic Harrison. The Calendar was drawn up by Comte himself and published in 1849, as "a concrete view of the preparatory period of man's history." Its purpose is thus described by Mr. Harrison in his preface:—

It was avowedly provisional, intended only for the Nineteenth Century and for Western Europe. Therein he arranged a series of typical names, illustrious in all departments of thought and power, beginning with Moses and ending with the poets and thinkers of the present century. The greatest names were associated with the months; fifty-two other great names with the weeks; and one worthy was given to each day of the year, less important types being in many cases substituted for those in leap-year. There are in all five hundred and thirty-eight names of eminent men and women in this Calendar, distributed into four classes of greater or less importance; they range over all ages, races, and countries; and they embrace Religion, Poetry, Philosophy, War, Statesmanship, Industry, and Science. . .

. . . It was regarded by its author as a work of art, carefully balanced and contrasted in its parts, and designed to convey a vivid impression of the *synthetic* or organic character of Man's general progress. For this reason it takes note only of work of a constructive and creative kind; and the most eminent destructives, revolutionists, and Protestants are not, as such, included, however useful for their time their solvent action may have been. The Calendar is that part of the work of Comte which has met with the greatest amount of assent: and it has been found useful and suggestive by very many who reject all other parts of Comte's system. They adopt the descrip-

tion of it given by Mr. Mill, who says: "No kind of human eminence, really useful, is omitted, except that which is merely negative and destructive."

The form of the Calendar is sufficiently described by Mr. Harrison. It will be enough to say that it consists of thirteen months of four weeks each. The months are thus apportioned: the first to Moses (representing Theocratic Civilisation); the second to Homer (Ancient Poetry); the third to Aristotle (Ancient Philosophy); the fourth to Archimedes (Ancient Science); the fifth to Cæsar (Military Civilisation); the sixth to St. Paul (Catholicism); the seventh to Charlemagne (Feudal Civilisation); the eighth to Dante (Modern Epic Poetry); the ninth to Gutenberg (Modern Industry); the tenth to Shakespeare (Modern Drama); the eleventh to Descartes (Modern Philosophy); the twelfth to Frederick II. (Modern Statesmanship); the thirteenth to Bichat (Modern Science). Of course it is easy to be puzzled with the system under which the names are grouped. One does not see very clearly why the painters should be classed under Epic Poetry, and the musicians under the Modern Drama. Some may think it strange to see Galileo, Newton, Lavoisier, and Lamarck sitting at the feet of Bichat. Thomas à Kempis too looks to heretic eyes a little out of place in the company of Byron and Shelley, of Klopstock and Madame de Staël. But a list of great names is like a list of the best books, or an anthology. Every man will prefer to make it for himself. "It would be grossly absurd," says Mr. Harrison, "to imagine that any possible list of names would be incapable of serious amendment." He admits that "We know more, and judge otherwise, than was possible in Paris forty or fifty years ago." It would be easy, he concedes, (and he might have enlarged his concession) to suggest a score of names that might be added or left out. But, "If the process of revision were once begun, it is difficult to see where it would end, or how

any two minds could agree in classifying five or six hundred names." Finally the Calendar was never designed to be "A class-list of rival candidates for fame. It is in no sense exclusive; it is provisional; and it is in every sense relative—framed with a view, not to personal merit, but to historical results." Such as it is, no attempt has been made to revise it; and on the whole the balance of opinion is likely to go with Mr. Harrison that, "As to at least five hundred names in the whole list competent authorities would probably agree."

There is ample entertainment in this book both for those who are determined to scoff and for those who, if they can, would pray. The gentlest eye, for instance, may stare to read that only by the school of Comte has Aristotle's greatness been fully recognised, and that only in Comte himself has the intellect of Aristotle found its match. Even a modern geologist might learn a lesson in "cocksureness" from the unwavering precision with which the history of Moses, and of the Bible generally, is mapped out. Professor Tyndall has laughed at the divines of the Westminster Assembly for the sturdiness of their belief in what they accepted as the Word of God; but the stoutest of them all sinks to a very Hamlet beside these modern philosophers. Yet, after all, who should be positive if not the Positivist? What at any rate should give the book an interest and importance for the mere idle reader, for him who has never heard the mystic *duc-dame*, or hearing has not understood, is the remarkable excellence of its biographies. They are not all, of course, of equal merit; some no doubt, even when one considers the conditions under which the writers have laboured, are inadequate; but, remembering what those conditions were, the average standard is surprisingly high. This is especially the case with those marked by Mr. Harrison's initials. No one needs to be told that Mr. Harrison, besides being a philosopher



and a politician, is also an accomplished man of letters. But the most experienced man of letters might fail without disgrace in this particular kind of work. Little books are often laughed at as a sort of tinned intellectual meats; but many have no doubt found how extremely difficult it is to write them well. To tell the story of even a great man's life in some two hundred pages or so might seem to those who have never tried an easy matter enough; but it will not seem so to any who have tried it. When the essence of the story has to be compressed into a page or two, or even less, the difficulty is increased a thousandfold. Of course this *Calendar* does not aim at being a critical, still less at being a biographical dictionary. Yet something of biography, something of criticism, has to be included in each one of these five hundred and fifty-eight articles. To present the essence of the man's work, that which has ensured him his title to a place in the *Calendar*, whether it was done in public affairs, in literature, science, or art, has been the purpose of this book. No unprejudiced reader will, I think, deny that it has been in the main accomplished with singular force, felicity, and precision. It would be hard, for instance, to better within the same compass Mr. Harrison's estimate of Scott and the real value and importance of his work:

The errors of this noble nature were inwoven with his whole conception of life. But at bottom the soul of Walter Scott was true, generous, warm, humane, and tender as any that ever spoke in immortal tones to men. Some of his happiest creations have not been surpassed in their own vein by Shakespeare himself. Some of his finest scenes have Homeric simplicity and charm; his best tales have refashioned the historic judgment of our age. The form in which the mighty improvisatore pours out his story is too often flaccid, and at times it descends to conventional bombast. Scott was no accurate historian, and hardly a learned antiquary; and it may be that no one of his novels is a complete masterpiece of the best that he could do. *Don Quixote*, *Tom Jones*, even Manzoni's

*The Betrothed*, are all more finished works of literary craft; but the glory of the *Waverley* cycle is the Shakesperian wealth of imagination, the historic glow which lights up, one after another, eight centuries of the past, the unerring instinct by which, in all its essentials, the spirit of chivalry is revealed to a sordid age.

Nor is Mr. Harrison less sound in his estimate of Byron; sound both in his judgment of the great poet and in his judgment of the little spirit which would refuse him the name of poet.

This is not the place to renew the long debate as to the poetry of Byron, of which the highest qualities have hardly yet been understood, and of which the glaring defects are now pedantically exaggerated. Keats, Shelley, and Tennyson, their interpreters and their imitators, have made our age exacting in the matter of musical cadence and subtle mastery of phrase such as mark the highest level of poetry. . . . He never seems to have realised the art of poetry as a mysterious alembic of musical language; but he poured out a torrent of impetuous thoughts in verse with the same reckless profusion as did Scott in prose. And both, we are now told, gave us rank commonplace, because they spoke in hot haste, using the first phrase that rose to the lip. . . . It would be an error to make too much of Byron's weakness in form. The invocations to Athens, to Rome, to the Sea, and some of the occasional lyrics show that he held the magic lyre of the poet, though it was of narrow compass and too often rang out a false note. Even at his best Byron can hardly write twenty lines without stumbling, and is at all times perilously near the prose of rhetoric. But his conceptions are neither prosaic, diluted, nor commonplace. And conceptions, not form, are the bone and sinew of all high poetry. Take Byron's work as a whole, and weigh its mass, its variety, its glow, its power of stirring nations, and of creating new modes of thought—its social, national, and popular influence—its effective inspiration on men—and we must place him, as did Scott and Goethe, among the great poetic forces of modern ages. To judge Byron truly, we must look on him with European and not with insular eyesight. His power, his directness, his social enthusiasm, fire the imagination of Europe, which is less troubled than we are to-day about his metrical poverty and conventional phrase. To Italians he is almost more an Italian than an English poet; to Greeks



he is the true author and prophet of their patriotic sentiments ; and in France and in Germany he is now more valued and studied than by his countrymen in a generation when subtle involution of idea and artful cadence of metre are the sole qualifications for the laurel crown. When this literary purism is over, Byron will be seen as the poet of the revolutionary movement which early in the nineteenth century awoke a new Renaissance.

The other day I read in a weekly paper a grave remonstrance to some one who had written a book about poetry in which he had dared to praise Byron. The author was reminded that "The higher modern criticism would not accept" Byron. It is difficult to know exactly where to look for the higher modern criticism. There is a vast amount of criticism about ; much of it is very modern ; all of it is, in one sense, very high. But Matthew Arnold certainly did not refuse to accept Byron ; his criticism can hardly yet have taken an antique complexion, and its standard was certainly not low. And here, in Mr. Frederic Harrison, we find another man of letters, of wide reading, of catholic sympathies (in letters at all events), of sound judgment, also not refusing to accept Byron. So the poor author aforesaid may take heart of grace and continue to nourish his admiration for a great poet in spite of that mysterious quantity known as "the higher modern criticism."

It would be easy to multiply examples of this *curiosa felicitas*, of the happy art with which the essential facts have been selected and expressed, and not less succinctly in biography than in criticism. But these two must suffice. They have been chosen because on these two men, Byron and Scott, more probably has been written than on any other of the great figures of this century. Mr. Harrison has of course made no new discoveries, nor professed to make any ; his criticism is not "original," nor could it be. The world, it has been said, generally gives its admiration, not to the man who does what nobody even

attempts to do, but to the man who does best what multitudes do well. If this be so, it should certainly give its admiration to what Mr. Harrison has done in this book. For what multitudes are now doing, and many, no doubt, doing well, he, as it seems to me, has done best.

### III.

Dr. BOYD's new book, *Twenty-Five Years at St. Andrews*, is sure of a welcome from all who recall with fondness *The Recollections of a Country Parson*. It is an entertaining medley of stories old and new, of gossip about men great and small, of the author's own predilections and prejudices ecclesiastical, literary, and social, expressed in that style which A. K. H. B. has made popular in many volumes. When he inclines to praise he does not stint his epithets, and, as becomes a minister of the gospel of peace and goodwill, he mostly inclines that way. He quotes Professor Baynes, the late editor of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, as one who never spoke ill of his friends, unlike those "Really good and able men, in listening to whose talk about their acquaintance the words of Dickens came as a refrain at the end of each sentence, 'Let him apply to Wilkins Micawber, and he will hear something not at all to his advantage.' " It was not so, on one occasion at least, with "the admirable Shairp," who, when "a wave of what is called *revival*" passed over St. Andrews, became suddenly moved to an extreme sensitiveness of conscience : "Only, somewhat perversely, his conscience pointed out Tulloch's sins, and not his own. And he penitently confessed these to many friends." But Tulloch only smiled ; for in truth "The very worst that could be said of him was that he really could not be much interested in Messrs. Moody and Sankey." Dr. Boyd does not show himself altogether inappreciative of Micawber's method ; but on the whole he may be allowed to do his spiriting gently

enough when his conscience compels him to do it at all. Of only one man mentioned by name in this volume does he find it difficult to speak any good thing, of William Allingham, sometime editor of *Fraser's Magazine*. An editor is the natural prey of gods and men, and poor Allingham does seem to have been the most unconscionable member of his unconscionable class. "Quite the most irritating editor I have known," Dr. Boyd calls him, and no wonder. He not only lost the manuscript of one of A. K. H. B.'s best essays (it is always the best that are lost), but, which was still more intolerable, he would alter those he did not lose, and always for the worse,—of course; when did editor ever alter for the better? "He was soon got rid of," says Dr. Boyd with something almost of an unholy satisfaction. "I should have left *Fraser* had he not done so." Well, well; poor Allingham has gone, and *Fraser* with him. This seems really the only recollection of his five-and-twenty years that has power to ruffle our good gossip's serenity. Truly said the Shepherd, "All contributors are in a manner fierce." But even to his editor Dr. Boyd cannot be wholly fierce: "I liked some of his poetry and read his *Rambles*."

The volume ('tis only an instalment) is full of stories, and many of them are extremely entertaining, characteristic both of the men of whom they are told and of him who tells them. Here, for instance, is one of Dean Stanley, of which perhaps some reader may be able to help Dr. Boyd to an explanation.

An incident recurs of that day on which we went round the Abbey. I had told Dean Edwards that he was to see one of our great preachers: indeed, after Caird, quite our most popular man. But when the Dean beheld MacGregor, he was disappointed, and said so. For MacGregor is small of stature: and though his face is very fine and expressive, it was difficult to take in that the little figure, wandering about the church a good deal in the rear of the party, was the telling orator that

Edinburgh knows. But our sight-seeing over, the little company parted: only Dean Edwards going with my daughter and me to Stanley's drawing-room for a little space. Here I said to Stanley, "You have heard MacGregor: I want you to tell this young Dean that he is indeed a great orator, though he looked it not to-day." Whereupon Stanley, in his most perfervid manner: "Yes, he is a great orator. You can no more judge what he is in a pulpit from seeing him waddling about Westminster Abbey, than you can judge of St. Paul from his Epistles." I cannot say that to this day I have fully caught Stanley's meaning. But I have given his very words.

But to all the good stories that Dr. Boyd tells perhaps the palm should be given—for reasons which cannot fail to be fully caught—to these two.

At Boarhill there was a public dinner after the duty was over. One of the many toasts was of course the schoolmaster: a hardwrought and underpaid man. In Scotland a schoolmaster used to be called a Dominie. As we arose to do honour to the toast, a Heritor, who ages before had taken his degree, and still retained some classical leaven, desired to utter some befitting sentiment. He had somewhat forgot his Latin. But, holding high his glass, he exclaimed with deep feeling, *Domine, dirige nos!* It sounded very appropriate. I remember a like case in which, when an unmelodious bell was loudly rung, to the torture of sensitive ears, one whose scholarship had grown rusty, exclaimed, "Ah, as Virgil says, *Bella, horrida Bella*."

One more must be added. When the late Duke of Buccleuch delivered his address as President of the British Association, which in 1867 held its meetings in Dundee, Sir Roderick Murchison was present and made a speech,—

In which he appeared as anything but a correct quoter of verse: for, relating certain perplexities as to the place of meeting, he stated that finally, in the words of the beloved Sir Walter (no Scot will add the surname), "We threw up our bonnets for bonny Dundee!" Sir Walter would have been surprised to hear the quotation. Bonny Dundee was a man, not a place; and no such words occur in the famous song.

How finely the author of a certain essay on *Imperfect Sympathies* had appreciated A. K. H. B.!

The mention of Scott's name recalls a curious story told here of Anthony Trollope. In the year following that in which Murchison gibbeted himself, Trollope came to St. Andrews as the guest of John Blackwood. He did not please Dr. Boyd, neither in looks, clothes, manners, nor speech. But his capital offence was his verdict on the *Waverley Novels*, delivered to a party of Scotsmen.

Mr. Trollope said that if any of Sir Walter's novels were offered to any London publisher of the present day, it would be at once rejected. We listened, humbly. Then it was asked whether this was because time had gone on and Sir Walter grown old-fashioned. "Not a bit: it is just because they are so dull." . . . The tone was most depreciatory all through. Possibly it was wilfulness on the part of the critic, or a desire to give his auditors a slap in the face; for I have in after time read a page of Trollope's on which Scott was praised highly. It is sometimes very difficult to know what is a man's real and abiding opinion.

Certainly this was not Trollope's abiding opinion of Scott, whom I have myself, and more than once, heard him praise as warmly as any Scotsman could desire. When he was in Tasmania, as the guest of Sir Charles Du Cane then Governor of that Colony,

he gave at His Excellency's request a lecture on Sir Walter which was described to me by one who heard it as a right good and noble thing. And in truth he was far too sound a judge of his own craft to think contemptuously of its greatest master. One would like to have heard Trollope's version of the scene in Blackwood's dining-room. He wore his heart on his sleeve, if ever man did, and perhaps he thought he had been unduly "heckled." Perhaps he had been on the links that day, and had not yet recovered from the shocks which he must assuredly have experienced there. The vision of Trollope plying his niblick in a lonely bunker is a thing the imagination boggles at. He had a downright way of expressing himself on occasion which to strangers was apt sometimes to give offence. But those who knew him knew well that, as was said of Johnson, there was nothing of the bear about him but his skin. In truth he has drawn his own portrait to the life in the words he wrote in his delightful *Autobiography* of his friend Sir Charles Taylor: "A man rough of tongue, brusque in his manners, odious to those who disliked him, somewhat inclined to tyranny, he was the prince of friends, honest as the sun, and as open-handed as Charity itself."

## THE STRANGER IN THE HOUSE.

GREAT is the difference between the first and the last session of a Parliament. When the House of Commons meets for the first time after a general election, the scene is full of novelty and excitement for most of the persons there. The old Members are glad that they have got safely back; the new ones are delighted with their position and surroundings. The wear and tear of the machine have not yet made themselves felt; Death has not been taking deep and wide sweeps with his scythe; the yoke of party sits lightly on the neck of the happy newcomer. One great ambition of his life has been gratified, for at some period or other almost every aspiring mind dreams, if only for a passing moment, of finding a suitable arena for itself in the House of Commons. And now here are some three hundred new Members who have realised their dreams. The magic doors swing open before them, and they have a right to take part in the making of all laws which are to govern their country. If they had no social position before (a thing that sometimes happens) they will get one now. They must be asked to official receptions; they are entitled to be presented at Court; they are eligible for the Reform or the Carlton Club. The importance which is attached to these aims and objects, by people who have hitherto been shut out from them, cannot be appreciated by those who have no desire or necessity to pursue them. Perhaps there may be something even better in store. An appreciative Minister may be on the look-out for rising talent. The eloquence which has won a seat may win an office. Genius is bound to make its way. Every Member enters the chamber flushed with victory, and confident that he will be able to fix the atten-

tion of the country upon himself if he can only get a good chance. Hope whispers: "You may look forward to almost anything you like here. Remember that this is the source of nearly all the honours and of most of the great prizes of public life, not to speak of appointments worth say a couple of thousand a year, and all sorts of good things in the Colonies." The first day of the first Session almost compensates a man for the trouble he has taken to secure his seat.

I happened to be a spectator of the scene when the present Parliament came together under these circumstances. Never before had new Members presented themselves in such formidable numbers. The officials were at their wits' ends to know what to do, and poor Sir Erskine May, who was then the chief clerk, was almost carried off his feet by the invading host. The doorkeepers had been obliged to let everybody pass unchallenged. On these occasions no certificate of election is required or produced, so that it would be quite possible for a bold outsider to mix with the throng, enter the House, and even get himself sworn, if he had audacity enough to carry things through to the end. It is utterly impossible for any one to identify all the newly elected Members for at least two or three weeks after a Parliament has settled down to its work. During that time the doorkeepers take every opportunity of "learning faces." The Speaker, during his intervals of leisure, pursues the same course of study, for he, like the Chairman of Committees, must always be ready to call upon everybody by his name. In the Parliament of 1885 there were over three hundred Members who took their seats in the House of Commons for the first

time. It is no easy matter to sort all these out, to remember every man's constituency, and to acquire a fair knowledge of his personal peculiarities. For some Members are very peculiar indeed, and require to be handled with great care and judgment. After the first day the doorkeepers can, and do, stop any one who is making his way past them, and ask him for his name. Occasionally a Member is to be heard of who so rarely puts in an appearance that even the doorkeepers never get to be quite sure about his identity. Such cases, however, in these days, when constituents learn all about the division-lists from the local papers, are few and far between.

On the ninth of last month there were a dozen new Members, for death had made havoc during the Recess. Undoubtedly it was not a cheerful scene. People on both sides of the House come to know each other pretty well after two or three years, and they cannot see the disappearance of one after another without regret. Political feeling very seldom degenerates into personal animosity within the House itself. There is occasionally a sour curmudgeon who will not have any social relations with any one from the opposite camp; but, generally speaking, a kindly feeling grows up among all the combatants, and the asperities of the platform are forgotten. Mr. Parnell was not a curmudgeon, but he would not upon principle have anything whatever to say to English Members, with a very few exceptions. Even when they sat near him, and were supporting him, he systematically ignored their existence. He did occasionally unbend, especially in the smoking-room; and I remember being profoundly astonished once to find him engaged in holding what was for him an animated conversation with an English Tory Member on some methods of agriculture pursued in Ireland. He usually preferred the strangers' smoking-room down stairs, so that we outsiders could now and then have an opportunity of contem-

plating him. When his seat had to be contested, his own friends could not save it, and a bitter opponent marched up to the table on the ninth of February and was sworn in as his successor. Who could have believed that possible eighteen months ago? Among Lord Melbourne's letters there is one in which he writes with his usual plainness, "The people of Ireland are not such d—— fools as the people of England. When they place confidence they do not withdraw it at the next instant." And he goes on to say: "When they trust a man, when they are really persuaded that he has their interest at heart, they do not throw him off because he does something which they cannot immediately understand or explain." When one thinks of Mr. Parnell's experiences during the last months of his life, and recalls what has happened since, one is inclined to think that Lord Melbourne might have modified his opinion if he had known as much as we do. In any case, it is curious enough now to look down upon the Irish benches. There are at least two distinct parties there, unequally divided in point of numbers, but containing men of real ability in both. There was a talk on the first day of their having come to a friendly settlement of all their differences. In the nature of things such a settlement is at present out of the question. The wounds which have been made on both sides are still bleeding. They will combine, when it suits them, against the common foe; but the prospect of a permanent treaty of peace is exceedingly remote. Mr. Timothy Healy and Mr. John Redmond will not be found reclining together under the same fig tree while this Parliament lasts.

On the first day of the Session, there was, as I have said, an unmistakable sense of depression all round. The Speaker's list of the dead was a long and mournful one, and when the actual business of the day began, it had to be intermingled with many references to the calamity which had



fallen so suddenly and so heavily upon the Royal Family. I heard all the *éloges* that were pronounced, including those in the House of Lords—where the Stranger is not allowed to sit down, but may stand huddled up with others in a sort of glorified cattle-pen. Lord Salisbury performed his task with all due gravity, and the Duke of Devonshire was equally grave, and perhaps a trifle more sympathetic. In the other House, Sir William Harcourt read a carefully-prepared address, and Mr. Balfour tried to do his best with something which was evidently beyond his resources. The truth is that there is only one man alive who can rise to the requisite height on such occasions as these, and give to the formal utterances of sympathy a lofty, almost a religious tone. That man is Mr. Gladstone. He alone can strike the true note. Everybody recognises it when it is struck, but no imitation of it can deceive the ear. But Mr. Gladstone had not returned to England when Parliament met, and there was no one to fill his place. When it came, however, to doing justice to poor Mr. Smith, Sir William Harcourt was quite equal to the occasion, and he even contrived to pay a compliment to Mr. Balfour, and to make it sound as if he meant it. After all that, it was not surprising that the old Adam broke out, and that the fighting-man of the Gladstonian party turned fiercely upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer and administered “the stick.” Mr. Goschen may be quite happy under these visitations, but if so his appearance is calculated to deceive the spectator. He is nervous, fidgety, restless; he cannot even assume the appearance of indifference. In that respect, if in no other, he is very like Mr. Gladstone, whose face when he is being attacked images every emotion of his mind. Astonishment, indignation, anger are all depicted upon it without disguise, so that the great gladiator’s humblest antagonist can always tell whether his shot has told. There is no one

now who can wear the stony mask of complete indifference so naturally as Mr. Disraeli succeeded in doing, though Mr. Chamberlain tries very hard to perform the feat. Trying hard, however, is the very way not to do this particular thing.

Mr. Chamberlain this year is a personage of greater importance than ever, for he is now the recognised leader of a party, and it must be said in all candour that he is evidently fully conscious of the fact. There are now five party leaders in the House, not reckoning Mr. Labouchere, who would not altogether approve of being omitted from the list. This multiplication of leaders is a very great inconvenience in practical politics, for it prevents any of those friendly arrangements for the management of business, and the time at which divisions may be taken, which formerly were always possible. There are too many Richmonds in the field, and the tendency is still for more to spring up. The papers often discuss what they call “Mr. Chamberlain’s position.” To the stranger who looks on at the scene from an impartial point of view, that position must certainly appear a highly curious, and even an anomalous one. From the front bench of the Liberal party, only a pace or two removed from Mr. Gladstone, there rises a man who proceeds in the coolest manner to pour out all sorts of sneers, reproaches, and bitter accusations on the heads of his former colleagues and neighbours. Such a flank fire as this must be exceedingly galling, and that those who are exposed to it feel it severely they take no pains to conceal. Even Mr. Morley, who seems to have as little personal or political bitterness in him as any man in the assembly, has cried out against it more than once. That probably adds to Mr. Chamberlain’s enjoyment of the situation. It certainly amuses the Conservatives. But how they would like to have a man planted, not only in their midst, but on their front bench, who was always

making their lives a burden to them is another question. They would probably not be quite so patient under the infliction as the Gladstonians have shown themselves.

Mr. Chamberlain's position is probably not quite what it would be if he could reconstruct it from top to bottom. It is complicated with many difficulties, perhaps with some anxieties. That Mr. Chamberlain can ever be in permanent alliance with the Conservatives is not possible, because some day the thorny issue of Disestablishment must come up, with some others of almost equal gravity. No compromise on these is ever to be reached. They may for the present be postponed, but that is all that any one has a right to ask or expect. Where, then, is Mr. Chamberlain's permanent home? At the head of a new party? No wise man believes in new parties. It cannot be in Tory ranks. Will it be with the Liberals once more? Much must be forgiven and forgotten on both sides before that can happen. The great bulk of the Liberal party, as it stands to-day, would rather be led by the youngest man in its ranks than by Mr. Chamberlain. The depth of feeling against him can only be understood by those who are able to get behind the scenes in the House of Commons. Nothing of this sort was ever exhibited towards Lord Hartington. Any one who heard Mr. Chamberlain's speech on the third day of the present Session might, from that circumstance alone, have got some insight into the cause of this difference. Let me be permitted to say that I have a great admiration for Mr. Chamberlain, but it cannot be denied that there is a certain vein in him which now and then crops out, and which, when it does make its appearance, is anything but lovely to look upon. Shall we call it self-assertion, arrogance, or vulgarity? Perhaps the last word would be chosen by severe critics to express what I mean. Now in the speech of February 11th this repellent characteristic was most marked.

It was Mr. Chamberlain's first speech as leader of the Liberal Unionists. Evidently he was anxious to show the sort of leader he was going to make. There had been too much, he seemed to think, of calmness and dignity. What men wanted to see now was the full play of the tomahawk and the scalping-knife. And these were brought out with much parade and show, and the calmness which even Mr. Chamberlain sometimes thinks it desirable to assume was thrown aside. He jumped into the ring with a ferocity which might have been more effective if it had not been so very obvious that a good deal of it consisted of mere acting. And at such times Mr. Chamberlain's entire manner, and even his voice, and his over-elaborate method of pronunciation, reveal the artificial nature of the performance. He quotes scraps of Latin and French, but never as if the weapons come naturally to his hands. He has a way of suddenly elevating his right arm, and then dropping it as suddenly with a loud smack against his leg, reminding one irresistibly of the action of a railway signal. He turns towards one of his old associates whom he is attacking as if he meant to wither him up then and there, and his sarcasms fall, not in that apparently casual and unpremeditated manner which alone can drive them home, but with the air of a man who has been rehearsing the whole thing, attitude, gestures, and everything else, before his mirror. This only happens when Mr. Chamberlain is at his worst, and decidedly he was at his worst on the occasion in question. He can make huge mistakes in taste. I remember that when eulogiums were being pronounced on Mr. Bright, after the death of that distinguished man—in whom, by the bye, there never was visible the faintest trace of vulgarity,—Mr. Chamberlain joined in the expressions of sorrow. He told the House that Birmingham had never allowed Mr. Bright to pay his election expenses. Remember and praise Mr. Bright if you will, but do not forget that Birmingham paid his

expenses. It would have occurred to few men at such a moment to throw in such a consideration as that.

Everybody, however, makes a slip at times, and in spite of all that Mr. Chamberlain has done in that direction, he remains a great power in the House of Commons. To play on that difficult instrument requires extraordinary abilities, but when once the mastery has been acquired, it gives the possessor an advantage which he need never wholly lose. He knows when to speak, he knows when to stop, he can fall in with the prevailing mood of the House, he can express what nine men out of ten in it are thinking, he can make himself the mouthpiece of its desires, its feelings, and its passions. While others are rambling about in a confused and blundering manner, he goes straight to the mark. He takes care that there shall be point and directness in everything that he says. He must have great address in covering up the weak points of his own case and in bringing out in the strongest relief those of the person he is criticising. He must be in earnest, or have the art of persuading men that he is. All this has been thoroughly mastered by Mr. Chamberlain, and as a mere debater I, as an old frequenter of the House, should be strongly disposed to put him first. Mr. Gladstone is so much more than a mere debater that it would be wrong to bring him within this category at all. Next to Mr. Chamberlain must be ranked Lord Randolph Churchill, and then, I think, Sir William Harcourt would have to be entered. After that there are several who stand on about the same level, though doubtless Mr. Balfour is shooting ahead of most of them. Public opinion appears to be that he is already first. I am pretty sure that this view is not shared by Mr. Balfour himself, and it certainly is not entertained by the House of Commons.

But Mr. Chamberlain's speech was not the only disappointment of the

early days of this Session. Everything was a disappointment, especially to the Gladstonian forces. A mighty raid upon the Government had been looked for. Lord Salisbury was to be made to feel that a dissolution was the only resource left open to him. Very likely there would be an explosion even on the very first day which would shatter the Administration to pieces. A great crowd came down in expectation of seeing something of this kind. Politicians in a state of eager expectation are ready to believe almost anything, and there were unquestionably many Gladstonians who looked for some decisive stroke at the outset of the Session. But the Ministry, if anything, seemed to get stronger day by day. The attacks upon it were never very brisk or effective. Sir William Harcourt had taken a good deal of pains, as was proved by the immense sheaf of manuscript before him, to frame his indictment, but his blows fell wide of the mark, except when they were directed at Mr. Goschen. As for the Irish debates which quickly followed, they were a decided help to the Government. It may safely be said that they always are. Something or other is pretty sure to arise which will shock or alarm the more moderate among the English Home Rulers, and which will supply the Conservatives with fresh ammunition. The long discussion on the demand for the release of the dynamiters, and that which followed on a motion of Mr. Sexton's bringing up the dangerous subject of Home Rule mixed with the question of Land Purchase, were worth a great deal to the Ministry. It may be asked, How is it, since the result was so well foreseen, that the regular leaders of the Opposition did not prevent these debates? That, indeed, is a painful theme to those same leaders. The Irish parties are completely beyond their control, even now that it is to their great interest to act together. Ireland, as represented in the House of Commons, is already a Republic,

where one man is as good as another and everybody does what he likes. There is a "union of hearts," it is true, or at any rate we are told on good authority that it is true; but it is only available for speeches on the platform. In the House of Commons, and in the practical management of parties, it is not worth an Irishman's old shoe.

There must be times when the most sanguine of the recognised and official leaders are filled with the gravest apprehensions for the future. How can they ever hope to work successfully with the materials at their disposal? No one could have watched Sir William Harcourt while the discussion on the dynamiters, or on Mr. Sexton's motion, was going on without realising the terrible straits to which he, for one, will be reduced. It is quite obvious that the Irishmen will never forgive the offences he committed in his unregenerate days. As Mr. J. G. Fitzgerald said one evening, "The Irish people would not be persuaded to enter into any sort of political confidence-trick with the right hon. member for Derby until he had given evidence of his *bona fides*." To insist on *bona fides* in connection with a confidence-trick is Irish and good, but no doubt Sir William Harcourt understood what his beloved colleague meant. He and his fellow leaders must see that whenever they come to power they will have a hard road to travel, and inflexible taskmasters over them. It would have been better for them had they been left to deal with Mr. Parnell single-handed. For now they have a number of men determined to revenge the death of Mr. Parnell, which is ascribed to the misdeeds of the Liberal party. The symptoms as they appear in the House are very much worse than they look in the newspapers. There is a suppressed venom in the tone of the Parnellites whenever they refer to the Liberal leaders, which does not come out even when they are attacking the Tories. The anti-Par-

nellites are apparently less bitter, but whenever the Home Rule question comes uppermost, they will have to follow in the wake of the other section. For on that main point the Irish people are united. They are not going to have any half-and-half measure. There is to be no nonsense about it. The campaign for the approaching election is to be conducted on the principle of "The least said the soonest mended." No information as to the future Bill is to be given. Unfortunately, even this condition does not seem likely to be allowed to pass unchallenged by the intractable followers of the late Mr. Parnell. On the third night of the Session, Mr. John Redmond, their leader, made an ominous remark, which appeared to me to send a cold shiver along the front Opposition bench. "When the proper time came," he said, "as it probably soon would, he and the other Irish members would no doubt feel called upon to express their opinions as to the necessity of the Liberal party dealing more in detail with their proposals on the Home Rule question." But that is the very thing which cannot be done without the greatest danger and risk. Mr. Morley had just made a triumphant hit by pointing to the fact that Rossendale had not asked for details. That was quite good enough for rhetorical purposes as against the Tories, but the argument drops to pieces if Mr. Gladstone's Irish allies refuse to accept it. Mr. J. Redmond, who is an able man, means to adopt that course. He insists on knowing what Mr. Gladstone means to offer Ireland. Twice already this Session he has thundered loudly at the closed door. He will not be put off. Thus Mr. Parnell's "soul," like John Brown's, is still "marching on."

So, for one reason and another, and in spite of the narrow escape from defeat which, owing to a bit of sharp practice, the Government had on the Address, the Session did not open in a very brilliant or encouraging manner for the Gladstonians. No doubt the

temporary absence of their leader made a good deal of difference to them, but still there was something in the air which even his return could scarcely remove. Speaking of the air, let the Stranger remark bluntly that in the House of Commons this Session it *smells*. What it smells of, I am not prepared to say, but since all the elaborate machinery was set in action for pumping in air from outside, and forcing it through layers of cotton wool and screens of canvas, and over ice, and up and down tubes, a flavour has been imparted to the House of Commons' atmosphere which by no means resembles that of the mountain tops. It is very doubtful whether these elaborate devices for filling the human lungs are calculated to answer the desired purpose. The simplest means of ventilation are, after all, the best. Theatres are never properly ventilated, but people do not sit in theatres eight or nine hours at a stretch. It is the length of time the House is used which makes it so difficult to keep up either a requisite supply of fresh air or a uniform temperature. But the difficulty has not been solved by the fans, tubes, screens, filters, and wool. If I am not greatly mistaken, all that paraphernalia will have to be swept outside into the Thames long before the present Session is over.

For already that deadly languor which steals over mind and body after a few hours spent in the House has shown itself in the faces and bearing of honourable Members. The friendly attendant in my gallery is generally half asleep before the dinner-hour. He too suspects the artificial air-shop downstairs. I have noticed that the clerks at the table cannot always resist the somnolent influences around them, apart altogether from the speaking. The scientific people will have to get back to first principles sooner or later. As for the draughts and cold currents which tear up and down all the passages and corridors and through the lobbies, I can confidently say that they are far worse than usual this year. The very first week of the Session, one of the Ministers was put *hors de combat* by a severe chill, and a much respected Member received his death-blow. Several Members who had come back in a weak state had to beat a retreat. These may not seem very important circumstances, but if a certain proportion of an army, none too large for its purpose even at its full strength, is always dropping out invalided, what are the unfortunate leaders to do! From that point of view, the atmosphere of the House of Commons might at any moment become a matter of national importance.



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# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE

APRIL, 1892

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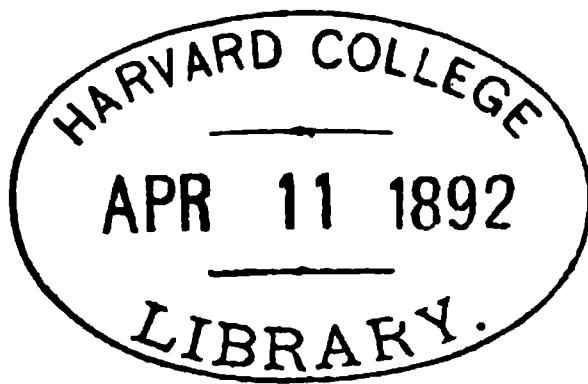
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# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

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DON ORSINO.<sup>1</sup>

BY F. MARION CRAWFORD.

## CHAPTER IX.

ORSINO's twenty-first birthday fell in the latter part of January, when the Roman season was at its height; but as the young man's majority did not bring him any of those sudden changes in position which make epochs in the lives of fatherless sons, the event was considered as a family matter and no great social celebration of it was contemplated. It chanced, too, that the day of the week was the one appropriated by the Montevarchi for their weekly dance, with which it would have been a mistake to interfere. The old Prince Saracinesca, however, insisted that a score of old friends should be asked to dinner, to drink the health of his eldest grandson, and this was accordingly done.

Orsino always looked back to that banquet as one of the dullest at which he ever assisted. The friends were literally old, and their conversation was not brilliant. Each one on arriving addressed to him a few congratulatory and moral sentiments, clothed in rounded periods and twanging of Cicero in his most sermonising mood. Each drank his especial health at the end of the dinner in a teaspoonful of old *vin santo*, and each made a stiff compliment to Corona on her youthful appearance. The men were almost all *grandees* of Spain of

the first class and wore their ribbons by common consent, which lent the assembly an imposing appearance; but several of them were of a somnolent disposition and nodded after dinner, which did not contribute to prolong the effect produced. Orsino thought their stories and anecdotes very long-winded and pointless, and even the old prince himself seemed oppressed by the solemnity of the affair, and rarely laughed. Corona, with serene good humour did her best to make conversation, and a shade of animation occasionally appeared at her end of the table; but Sant' Ilario was bored to the verge of extinction and talked of nothing but archæology and the trial of the Cenci, wondering inwardly why he chose such exceedingly dry subjects. As for Orsino, the two old princesses between whom he was placed paid very little attention to him, and talked across him about the merits of their respective confessors and directors. He frivolously asked them whether they ever went to the theatre, to which they replied very coldly that they went to their boxes when the piece was not on the Index and when there was no ballet. Orsino understood why he never saw them at the opera, and relapsed into silence. The butler, a son of the legendary Pasquale of earlier days, did his best to cheer the youngest of his masters with a great

<sup>1</sup> Copyright 1891, by Macmillan and Co.



variety of wines; but Orsino would not be comforted either by very dry champagne or very mellow claret. But he vowed a bitter revenge and swore to dance till three in the morning at the Montevarchis and finish the night with a rousing baccarat at the club, which projects he began to put into execution as soon as was practicable.

In due time the guests departed, solemnly renewing their expressions of good wishes, and the Saracinesca household was left to itself. The old prince stood before the fire in the state drawing-room, rubbing his hands and shaking his head. Giovanni and Corona sat on opposite sides of the fireplace, looking at each other and somewhat inclined to laugh. Orsino was intently studying a piece of historical tapestry, which had never interested him before.

The silence lasted some time. Then old Saracinesca raised his head and gave vent to his feelings, with all his old energy.

"What a museum!" he exclaimed. "I would not have believed that I should live to dine in my own house with a party of stranded figure-heads set up in rows around my table! The paint is all worn off, and the brains are all worn out, and there is nothing left but a cracked old block of wood with a ribbon around its neck. You will be just like them, Giovanni, in a few years, for you will be just like me—we all turn into the same shape at seventy, and if we live a dozen years longer it is because Providence designs to make us an awful example to the young."

"I hope you do not call yourself a figure-head," said Giovanni.

"They are calling me by worse names at this very minute as they drive home. 'That old Methuselah of a Saracinesca, how has he the face to go on living?' That is the way they talk. 'People ought to die decently when other people have had enough of them, instead of sitting up at the table like death's-heads to grin

at their grandchildren and great-grandchildren!' They talk like that, Giovanni. I have known some of those old monuments for sixty years and more, since they were babies and I was of Orsino's age. Do you suppose I do not know how they talk? You always take me for a good confiding old fellow, Giovanni. But then, you never understood human nature."

Giovanni laughed and Corona smiled. Orsino turned round to enjoy the rare delight of seeing the old gentleman rouse himself in a fit of temper.

"If you were ever confiding it was because you were too good," said Giovanni affectionately.

"Yes—good and confiding—that is it! You always did agree with me as to my own faults. Is it not true, Corona? Can you not take my part against that graceless husband of yours? He is always abusing me—as though I were his property, or his guest. Orsino, my boy, go away—we are all quarrelling here like a pack of wolves, and you ought to respect your elders. Here is your father calling me by bad names——"

"I said you were too good," observed Giovanni.

"Yes—good and confiding! If you can find anything worse to say, say it,—and may you live to hear that good-for-nothing Orsino call you good and confiding when you are eighty-two years old. And Corona is laughing at me. It is insufferable. You used to be a good girl, Corona—but you are so proud of having four sons that there is no possibility of talking to you any longer. It is a pity that you have not brought them up better. Look at Orsino! He is laughing too."

"Certainly not at you, grandfather," the young man hastened to say.

"Then you must be laughing at your father or your mother, or both, since there is no one else here to laugh at. You are concocting sharp speeches for your abominable tongue. I know it; I can see it in your eyes. That is the way you have brought up your

children, Giovanni. I congratulate you. Upon my word, I congratulate you with all my heart! Not that I ever expected anything better. You addled your own brains with curious foreign ideas on your travels—the greater fool I for letting you run about the world when you were young. I ought to have locked you up in Saracinesca, on bread and water, until you understood the world well enough to profit by it. I wish I had.”

None of the three could help laughing at this extraordinary speech. Orsino recovered his gravity first, by the help of the historical tapestry. The old gentleman noticed the fact.

“Come here, Orsino, my boy,” he said. “I want to talk to you.”

Orsino came forward. The old prince laid a hand on his shoulder and looked up into his face.

“You are twenty-one years old to-day,” he said, “and we are all quarrelling in honour of the event. You ought to be flattered that we should take so much trouble to make the evening pass pleasantly for you, but you probably have not the discrimination to see what your amusement costs us.”

His grey beard shook a little, his rugged features twitched, and then a broad, good-humoured smile lit up the old face.

“We are quarrelsome people,” he continued in his most cheerful and hearty tone. “When Giovanni and I were young,—we were young together, you know—we quarrelled every day as regularly as we ate and drank. I believe it was very good for us. We generally made it up before night—for the sake of beginning again with a clear conscience. Anything served us—the weather, the soup, the colour of a horse.”

“You must have led an extremely lively life,” observed Orsino considerably amused.

“It was very well for us, Orsino. But it will not do for you. You are not so much like your father, as he was like me at your age. We

fought with the same weapons, but you two would not, if you fought at all. We fenced for our own amusement, and we kept the buttons on the foils. You have neither my really angelic temper nor your father’s stony coolness—he is laughing again—no matter, he knows it is true. You have a diabolical tongue. Do not quarrel with your father for amusement, Orsino. His calmness will exasperate you as it does me, but you will not laugh at the right moment as I have done all my life. You will bear malice, and grow sullen and permanently disagreeable. And do not say all the cutting things you think of, because with your disposition you will get into serious trouble. If you have really good cause for being angry, it is better to strike than to speak, and in such cases I strongly advise you to strike first. Now go and amuse yourself, for you must have had enough of our company. I do not think of any other advice to give you on your coming of age.”

Thereupon he laughed again and pushed his grandson away, evidently delighted with the lecture he had given him. Orsino was quick to profit by the permission and was soon in the Montevarchi ballroom, doing his best to forget the lugubrious feast in his own honour at which he had lately assisted.

He was not altogether successful, however. He had looked forward to the day for many months as one of rejoicing as well as of emancipation, and he had been grievously disappointed. There was something of ill augury, he thought, in the appalling dullness of the guests, for they had congratulated him upon his entry into a life exactly similar to their own. Indeed, the more precisely similar it proved to be, the more he would be respected when he reached their advanced age. The future unfolded to him was not gay. He was to live forty, fifty, or even sixty years in the same round of traditions and hampered by the same net of prejudices. He might have his romance, as his father

had had before him, but there was nothing beyond that. His father seemed perfectly satisfied with his own unruffled existence and far from desirous of any change. The feudalism of it all was still real in fact, though abolished in theory; and the old prince was as much a great feudal lord as ever, whose interests were almost tribal in their narrowness, almost sordid in their detail, and altogether uninteresting to his presumptive heir in the third generation. What was the peasant of Aquaviva, for instance, to Orsino? Yet Sant' Ilario and old Saracinesca took a lively interest in his doings and in the doings of four or five hundred of his kind, whom they knew by name and spoke of as belongings, much as they would have spoken of books in the library. To collect rents from peasants and to ascertain in person whether their houses needed repair was not a career. Orsino thought enviously of San Giacinto's two sons, leading what seemed to him a life of comparative activity and excitement in the Italian army, and having the prospect of distinction by their own merits. He thought of San Giacinto himself, of his ceaseless energy and of the great position he was building up. San Giacinto was a Saracinesca as well as Orsino, bearing the same name and perhaps not less respected than the rest by the world at large, though he had sullied his hands with finance. Even Del Ferice's position would have been above criticism, but for certain passages in his earlier life not immediately connected with his present occupation. And as if such instances were not enough there were, to Orsino's certain knowledge, half a dozen men of his father's rank even now deeply engaged in the speculations of the day. Montevarchi was one of them, and neither he nor the others made any secret of their doings.

"Surely," thought Orsino, "I have as good a head as any of them, except, perhaps, San Giacinto."

And he grew more and more dis-

contented with his lot, and more and more angry at himself for submitting to be bound hand and foot and sacrificed upon the altar of feudalism. Everything had disappointed and irritated him on that day; the weariness of the dinner, the sight of his parents' placid felicity, the advice his grandfather had given him—good of its kind, but lamentably insufficient, to say the least of it. He was rapidly approaching that state of mind in which young men do the most unexpected things for the mere pleasure of surprising their relations.

He grew tired of the ball because Madame d'Aranjuez was not there. He longed to dance with her and he wished that he were at liberty to frequent the houses to which she was asked. But as yet she saw only the Whites and had not made the acquaintance of a single Grey family, in spite of his entreaties. He could not tell whether she had any fixed reason in making her choice, or whether as yet it had been the result of chance, but he discovered that he was bored wherever he went because she was not present. At supper-time on this particular evening, he entered into a conspiracy with certain choice spirits to leave the party and adjourn to the club and cards.

The sight of the tables revived him and he drew a long breath as he sat down with a cigarette in his mouth and a glass at his elbow. It seemed as though the day were beginning at last.

Orsino was no more a born gambler than he was disposed to be a hard drinker. He loved excitement in any shape, and being so constituted as to bear it better than most men, he took it greedily in whatever form it was offered to him. He neither played nor drank every day, but when he did either he was inclined to play more than other people and to consume more strong liquor. Yet his judgment was not remarkable, nor his head much stronger than the heads of his companions. Great gamblers do

not drink and great drinkers are not good players, though they are sometimes amazingly lucky when in their cups.

It is of no use to deny the enormous influence of brandy and games of chance on the men of the present day, but there is little profit in describing such scenes as take place nightly in many clubs all over Europe. Something might be gained, indeed, if we could trace the causes which have made gambling especially the vice of our generation, for that discovery might show us some means of influencing the next. But I do not believe that this is possible. The times have undoubtedly grown more dull as civilisation has made them more alike, but there is, I think, no truth in the common statement that vice is bred of idleness. The really idle man is a poor creature, incapable of strong sins. It is far more often the man of superior gifts, with faculties overwrought and nerves strained above concert pitch by excessive mental exertion, who turns to vicious excitement for the sake of rest, as a duller man falls asleep. Men whose lives are spent amidst the vicissitudes, surprises, and disappointments of the money-market are assuredly less idle than country gentlemen; the busy lawyer has less time to spare than the equally gifted fellow of a college; the skilled mechanic works infinitely harder, taking the average of the whole year, than the agricultural labourer; the life of a sailor on an ordinary merchant-ship is one of rest, ease, and safety compared with that of the collier. Yet there can hardly be a doubt as to which individual in each example is the one to seek relaxation in excitement, innocent or the reverse, instead of in sleep. The operator in the stock-market, the barrister, the mechanic, the miner, in every case the men whose faculties are the more severely strained, are those who seek strong emotions in their daily leisure, and who are the more inclined to extend that leisure at the expense of bodily

rest. It may be objected that the worst vice is found in the highest grades of society, that is to say, among men who have no settled occupation. I answer that, in the first place, this is not a known fact, but a matter of speculation; and that the conclusion is principally drawn from the circumstance that the evil deeds of such persons, when they become known, are very severely criticised by those whose criticism has the most weight, namely, by the equals of the sinners in question,—as well as by writers of fiction whose opinions may or may not be worth considering. For one Zola, historian of the Rougon-Macquart family, there are a hundred would-be Zolas, censors of a higher class, less unpleasantly fond of accurate detail, perhaps, but as merciless in intention. But even if the case against society be proved, which is possible, I do not think that society can truly be called idle because many of those who compose it have no settled occupation. The social day is a long one. Society would not accept the eight hours' system demanded by the labour-unions. Society not uncommonly works at a high pressure for twelve, fourteen, and even sixteen hours at a stretch. The mental strain, though not of the most intellectual order, is incomparably more severe than that required for success in many lucrative professions or crafts. The general absence of a distinct aim sharpens the faculties in the keen pursuit of details, and lends an importance to trifles which overburdens at every turn the responsibility borne by the nerves. Lazy people are not favourites in drawing-rooms, and still less at the dinner-table. Consider also that the average man of the world, and many women, daily sustain an amount of bodily fatigue equal perhaps to that borne by many mechanics and craftsmen and much greater than that required in the liberal professions, and that, too, under far less favourable conditions. Recapitulate all these points. Add together the

physical effort, the mental activity, the nervous strain. Take the sum and compare it with that got by a similar process from other conditions of existence. I think there can be little doubt of the verdict. The force exerted is wasted, if you please, but it is enormously great, and more than sufficient to prove that those who daily exert it are by no means idle. Besides, none of the inevitable outward and visible results of idleness are apparent in the ordinary man or woman of society. On the contrary, most of them exhibit the peculiar and unmistakable signs of physical exhaustion, chief of which is cerebral anæmia. They are over-trained and overworked; in the language of training they are "stale."

Men like Orsino Saracinesca are not vicious at his age, though they may become so. Vice begins when the excitement ceases to be a matter of taste and turns into a necessity. Orsino gambled because it amused him when no other amusement was obtainable, and he drank while he played because it made the amusement seem more amusing. He was far too young and healthy and strong to feel an irresistible longing for anything not natural.

On the present occasion he cared very little, at first, whether he won or lost, and as often happens to a man in that mood he won a considerable sum during the first hour. The sight of the notes before him strengthened an idea which had crossed his mind more than once of late, and the stimulants he drank suddenly fixed it into a purpose. It was true that he did not command any sum of money which could be dignified by the name of capital, but he generally had enough in his pocket to play with, and to-night he had rather more than usual. It struck him that if he could win a few thousands by a run of luck, he would have more than enough to try his fortune in the building-speculations of which Del Ferice had talked. The scheme took shape and at once lent a passionate interest to his play.

Orsino had no system and generally left everything to chance, but he had no sooner determined that he must win than he improvised a method, and began to play carefully. Of course he lost, and as he saw his heap of notes diminishing, he filled his glass more and more often. By two o'clock he had but five hundred francs left, his face was deadly pale, the lights dazzled him, and his hands moved uncertainly. He held the bank and he knew that if he lost on the card he must borrow money, which he did not wish to do.

He dealt himself a five of spades, and glanced at the stakes. They were considerable. A last sensation of caution prevented him from taking another card. The table turned up a six and he lost.

"Lend me some money, Filippo," he said to the man nearest him, who immediately counted out a number of notes.

Orsino paid with the money and the bank passed. He emptied his glass and lit a cigarette. At each succeeding deal he staked a small sum and lost it, till the bank came to him again. Once more he held a five. The other men saw that he was losing and put up all they could. Orsino hesitated. Some one observed justly that he probably held a five again. The lights swam indistinctly before him and he drew another card. It was a four. Orsino laughed nervously as he gathered the notes and paid back what he had borrowed.

He did not remember clearly what happened afterwards. The faces of the cards grew less distinct and the lights more dazzling. He played blindly and won almost without interruption until the other men dropped off one by one, having lost as much as they cared to part with at one sitting. At four o'clock in the morning Orsino went home in a cab, having about fifteen thousand francs in his pockets. The men he had played with were mostly young fellows like himself, having a limited allowance of



pocket-money, and Orsino's winnings were very large in the circumstances.

The night air cooled his head and he laughed gaily to himself as he drove through the deserted streets. His hand was steady enough now, and the gas lamps did not move disagreeably before his eyes. But he had reached the stage of excitement in which a fixed idea takes hold of the brain, and if it had been possible he would undoubtedly have gone as he was, in evening dress with his winnings in his pocket, to rouse Del Ferice, or San Giacinto, or any one else who could put him in the way of risking his money on a building-lot. He reluctantly resigned himself to the necessity of going to bed, and slept as one sleeps at twenty-one until nearly eleven o'clock on the following morning.

While he dressed he recalled the circumstances of the previous night and was surprised to find that his idea was as fixed as ever. He counted the money. There was five times as much as the Del Ferice's carpenter, tobacco-nist, and mason had been able to scrape together among them. He had therefore, according to his simple calculation, just five times as good a chance of succeeding as they. And they had been successful. His plan fascinated him, and he looked forward to the constant interest and occupation with a delight which was creditable to his character. He would be busy, and the magic word "business" rang in his ears. It was speculation, no doubt, but he did not look upon it as a form of gambling; if he had done so, he would not have cared for it on two consecutive days. It was something much better in his eyes. It was to do something, to be some one, to strike out of the everlastingly dull road which lay before him and which ended in the vanishing point of an insignificant old age.

He had not the very faintest conception of what that business was with which he aspired to occupy himself. He was totally ignorant of the methods of dealing with money, and

he no more knew what a draft at three months meant than he could have explained the construction of the watch he carried in his pocket. Of the first principles of building he knew, if possible, even less, and he did not know whether land in the city were worth a franc or a thousand francs by the square foot. But he said to himself that those things were mere details, and that he could learn all he needed of them in a fortnight. Courage and judgment, Del Ferice had said, were the chief requisites for success. Courage he possessed, and he believed himself cool. He would avail himself of the judgment of others until he could judge for himself.

He knew very well what his father would think of the whole plan, but he had no intention of concealing his project. Since yesterday he was of age and was therefore his own master to the extent of his own small resources. His father had not the power to keep him from entering upon any honourable undertaking, though he might justly refuse to be responsible for the consequences. At the worst, thought Orsino, those consequences might be the loss of the money he had in hand. Since he had nothing else to risk, he had nothing else to lose. That is the light in which most inexperienced people regard speculation. Orsino therefore went to his father and unfolded his scheme, without mentioning Del Ferice.

Sant' Ilario listened rather impatiently and laughed when Orsino had finished. He did not mean to be unkind, and if he had dreamed of the effect his manner would produce, he would have been more careful. But he did not understand his son, as he himself had been understood by his own father.

"This is all nonsense, my boy," he answered. "It is a mere passing fancy. What do you know of business or architecture, or of a dozen other matters which you ought to understand thoroughly before attempting anything like what you propose?"

Orsino was silent, and looked out of the window, though he was evidently listening.

"You say you want an occupation. This is not one. Banking is an occupation, and architecture is a career, but what we call affairs in Rome are neither one nor the other. If you want to be a banker you must go into a bank and do clerk's work for years. If you mean to follow architecture as a profession you must spend four or five years in study at the very least."

"San Giacinto has not done that," observed Orsino coldly.

"San Giacinto has a very much better head on his shoulders than you, or I, or almost any other man in Rome. He has known how to make use of other men's talents, and he had a rather more practical education than I would have cared to give you. If he were not one of the most honest men alive he would certainly have turned out one of the greatest scoundrels."

"I do not see what that has to do with it," said Orsino.

"Not much, I confess. But his early life made him understand men as you and I cannot understand them, and need not, for that matter."

"Then you object to my trying this?"

"I do nothing of the kind. When I object to the doing of anything I prevent it by fair words or by force. I am not inclined for a pitched battle with you, Orsino, and I might not get the better of you after all. I will be perfectly neutral. I will have nothing to do with this business. If I believed in it, I would give you all the capital you could need, but I shall not diminish your allowance in order to hinder you from throwing it away. If you want more money for your amusements or luxuries, say so. I am not fond of counting small expenses, and I have not brought you up to count them either. Do not gamble at cards any more than you can help, but if you lose and must borrow, borrow of me. When I think you are going too far,

I will tell you so. But do not count upon me for any help in this scheme of yours. You will not get it. If you find yourself in a commercial scrape, find your own way out of it. If you want better advice than mine, go to San Giacinto. He will give you a practical man's view of the case."

"You are frank, at all events," said Orsino, turning from the window and facing his father.

"Most of us are in this house," answered Sant' Ilario. "That will make it all the harder for you to deal with the scoundrels who call themselves men of business."

"I mean to try this, father," said the young man. "I will go and see San Giacinto, as you suggest, and I will ask his opinion. But if he discourages me I will try my luck all the same. I cannot lead this life any longer. I want an occupation, and I will make one for myself."

"It is not an occupation that you want, Orsino. It is another excitement. That is all. If you want an occupation, study, learn something, find out what work means. Or go to Saracinesca and build houses for the peasants; you will do no harm there, at all events. Go and drain that land in Lombardy; I can do nothing with it and would sell it if I could. But that is not what you want. You want an excitement for the hours of the morning. Very well. You will probably find more of it than you like. Try it; that is all I have to say."

Like many very just men Giovanni could state a case with alarming unfairness when thoroughly convinced that he was right. Orsino stood still for a moment and then walked towards the door without another word. His father called him back.

"What is it?" asked Orsino coldly.

Sant' Ilario held out his hand with a kindly look in his eyes.

"I do not want you to think that I am angry, my boy. There is to be no ill feeling between us about this?"

"None whatever," said the young man, though without much alacrity

as he shook hands with his father. "I see you are not angry. You do not understand me, that is all."

He went out, more disappointed with the result of the interview than he had expected, though he had not looked forward to receiving any encouragement. He had known very well what his father's views were, but he had not foreseen that he would be so much irritated by the expression of them. His determination hardened, and he resolved that nothing should hinder him. But he was both willing and ready to consult San Giacinto, and went to the latter's house immediately on leaving Sant' Ilario's study.

As for Giovanni, he was dimly conscious that he had made a mistake, though he did not care to acknowledge it. He was a good horseman, and he was aware that he would have used a very different method with a restive colt. But few men are wise enough to see that there is only one universal principle to follow in the exertion of strength, moral or physical; and instead of seeking analogies out of actions familiar to them as a means of accomplishing the unfamiliar, they try to discover new theories of motion at every turn, and are led farther and farther from the right line by their own desire to reach the end quickly.

"At all events," thought Sant' Ilario, "the boy's new hobby will take him to places where he is not likely to meet that woman."

And with this discourteous reflection upon Madame d'Aranjuez he consoled himself. He did not think it necessary to tell Corona of Orsino's intentions, simply because he did not believe that they would lead to anything serious, and there was no use in disturbing her unnecessarily with visions of future annoyance. If Orsino chose to speak of it to her, he was at liberty to do so.

## CHAPTER X.

ORSINO went directly to San Giacinto's house, and found him in the room which he used for working, and

in which he received the many persons whom he was often obliged to see on business. The giant was alone and was seated behind a broad polished table, occupied in writing. Orsino was struck by the extremely orderly arrangement of everything he saw. Papers were tied together in bundles of exactly like shape, which lay in two lines of mathematical precision. The big inkstand was just in the middle of the rows, and a paper-cutter, a pen-rack, and an erasing-knife lay side by side in front of it. The walls were lined with low book-cases of a heavy and severe type, filled principally with documents neatly filed in volumes and marked on the back in San Giacinto's clear handwriting. The only object of beauty in the room was a full-length portrait of Flavia by a great artist, which hung above the fireplace. The rigid symmetry of everything was made imposing by the size of the objects—the table was larger than ordinary tables, the easy-chairs were deeper, broader, and lower than common, the inkstand was bigger, even the penholder in San Giacinto's fingers was longer and thicker than any Orsino had ever seen. And yet the latter felt that there was no affectation about all this. The man to whom these things belonged, and who used them daily, was himself created on a scale larger than other men.

Though he was older than Sant' Ilario, and was, in fact, not far from sixty years of age, San Giacinto might easily have passed for less than fifty. There was hardly a grey thread in his short, thick, black hair, and he was still as lean and strong, and almost as active, as he had been thirty years earlier. The large features were perhaps a little more bony, and the eyes somewhat deeper than they had been, but these changes lent an air of dignity rather than of age to the face.

He rose to meet Orsino, and then made him sit down beside the table. The young man suddenly felt an unaccountable sense of inferiority, and hesitated as to how he should begin.

"I suppose you want to consult me about something," said San Giacinto quietly.

"Yes. I want to ask your advice, if you will give it to me, about a matter of business."

"Willingly. What is it?"

Orsino was silent for a moment and stared at the wall. He was conscious that the very small sum of which he could dispose must seem even smaller in the eyes of such a man, but this did not disturb him. He was oppressed by San Giacinto's personality, and prepared himself to speak as though he had been a student undergoing oral examination. He stated his case plainly, when he at last spoke. He was of age, and he looked forward with dread to an idle life. All careers were closed to him. He had fifteen thousand francs in his pocket. Could San Giacinto help him to occupy himself by investing the sum in a building speculation? Was the sum sufficient as a beginning? Those were the questions.

San Giacinto did not laugh as Sant' Ilario had done. He listened very attentively to the end, and then deliberately offered Orsino a cigar and lit one himself before he delivered his answer.

"You are asking the same question that is put to me very often," he said at last. "I wish I could give you any encouragement. I cannot."

Orsino's face fell, for the reply was categorical. He drew back a little in his chair, but said nothing.

"That is my answer," continued San Giacinto thoughtfully, "but when one says 'no' to another, the subject is not necessarily exhausted. On the contrary, in such a case as this I cannot let you go without giving you my reasons. I do not care to give my views to the public, but such as they are, you are welcome to them. The time is past. That is why I advise you to have nothing to do with any speculation of this kind. That is the best of all reasons."

"But you yourself are still en-

gaged in this business," objected Orsino.

"Not so deeply as you fancy. I have sold almost everything which I do not consider a certainty, and am selling what little I still have as fast as I can. In speculation there are only two important moments,—the moment to buy and the moment to sell. In my opinion this is the time to sell, and I do not think that the time for buying will come again without a crisis."

"But everything is in such a flourishing state——"

"No doubt it is,—to-day. But no one can tell what state business will be in next week, nor even to-morrow."

"There is Del Ferice——"

"No doubt, and a score like him," answered San Giacinto, looking quietly at Orsino. "Del Ferice is a banker, and I am a speculator, as you wish to be. His position is different from ours. It is better to leave him out of the question. Let us look at the matter logically. You wish to speculate——"

"Excuse me," said Orsino, interrupting him. "I want to try what I can do in business."

"You wish to risk money, in one way or another. You therefore wish one or more of three things,—money for its own sake, excitement, or occupation. I can hardly suppose that you want money. Eliminate that. Excitement is not a legitimate aim, and you can get it more safely in other ways. Therefore you want occupation."

"That is precisely what I said at the beginning," observed Orsino with a shade of irritation.

"Yes. But I like to reach my conclusions in my own way. You are, then, a young man in search of an occupation. Speculation, and what you propose is nothing else, is no more an occupation than playing at the public lottery, and much less one than playing at baccarat. There at least you are responsible for your own

mistakes, and in decent society you are safe from the machinations of dishonest people. That would matter less if the chances were in your favour, as they might have been a year ago and as they were in mine from the beginning. They are against you now, because it is too late, and they are against me. I would as soon buy a piece of land on credit at the present moment, as give the whole sum in cash to the first man I met in the street."

"Yet there is Montevarchi who still buys——"

"Montevarchi is not worth the paper on which he signs his name," said San Giacinto calmly.

Orsino uttered an exclamation of surprise and incredulity. "You may tell him so, if you please," answered the giant with perfect indifference. "If you tell any one what I have said, please to tell him first, that is all. He will not believe you. But in six months he will know it, I fancy, as well as I know it now. He might have doubled his fortune, but he was and is totally ignorant of business. He thought it enough to invest all he could lay hands on and that the returns would be sure. He has invested forty millions, and owns property which he believes to be worth sixty, but which will not bring ten in six months, and those remaining ten millions he owes on all manner of paper, on mortgages on his original property, in a dozen ways which he has forgotten himself."

"I do not see how that is possible!" exclaimed Orsino.

"I am a plain man, Orsino, and I am your cousin. You may take it for granted that I am right. Do not forget that I was brought up in a hand-to-hand struggle for fortune such as you cannot dream of. When I was your age I was a practical man of business, and I had taught myself, and it was all on such a small scale that a mistake of a hundred francs made the difference between profit and loss. I dislike details, but I have been a man of detail all my

life by force of circumstances. Successful business implies the comprehension of details. It is tedious work, and if you mean to try it you must begin at the beginning. You ought to do so. There is an enormous business before you with considerable capabilities in it. If I were in your place, I would take what fell naturally to my lot."

"What is that?"

"Farming. They call it agriculture in Parliament, because they do not know what farming means. The men who think that Italy can live without farmers are fools. We are not a manufacturing people any more than we are a business people. The best dictator for us would be a practical farmer, a ploughman like Cincinnatus. Nobody who has not tried to raise wheat on an Italian mountain-side knows the great difficulties or the great possibilities of our country. Do you know that bad as our farming is, and absurd as is our system of land-taxation, we are food-exporters to a small extent? The beginning is there. Take my advice; be a farmer. Manage one of the big estates you have among you for five or six years. You will not do much good to the land in that time, but you will learn what land really means. Then go into Parliament and tell people facts. That is an occupation and a career as well, which cannot be said of speculation in building-lots, large or small. If you have any ready money keep it in government bonds until you have a chance of buying something worth keeping."

Orsino went away disappointed and annoyed. San Giacinto's talk about farming seemed very dull to him. To bury himself for half-a-dozen years in the country in order to learn the rotation of crops and the principles of land-draining did not present itself as an attractive career. If San Giacinto thought farming the great profession of the future, why did he not try it himself? Orsino dismissed the idea rather indignantly, and his determination to try his luck became stronger



by the opposition it met. Moreover, he had expected very different language from San Giacinto, whose sober view jarred on Orsino's enthusiastic impulse.

But he now found himself in considerable difficulty. He was ignorant even of the first steps to be taken, and knew no one to whom he could apply for information. There was Prince Montevarchi, indeed, who, though he was San Giacinto's brother-in-law, seemed by the latter's account to have got into trouble. He did not understand how San Giacinto could allow his wife's brother to ruin himself without lending him a helping hand, but San Giacinto was not the kind of man of whom people ask indiscreet questions, and Orsino had heard that the two men were not on the best of terms. Possibly good advice had been offered and refused. Such affairs generally end in a breach of friendship. However that might be, Orsino would not go to Montevarchi.

He wandered aimlessly about the streets, and the money seemed to burn in his pocket, though he had carefully deposited it in a place of safety at home. Again and again Del Ferice's story of the carpenter and his two companions recurred to his mind. He wondered how they had set about beginning, and he wished he could ask Del Ferice himself. He could not go to the man's house, but he might possibly meet him at Maria Consuelo's. He was surprised to find that he had almost forgotten her in his anxiety to become a man of business. It was too early to call yet, and in order to kill the time he went home, got a horse from the stables, and rode out into the country for a couple of hours.

At half-past five o'clock he entered the familiar little sitting-room in the hotel. Madame d'Aranjuez was alone, cutting a new book with the jewelled knife which continued to be the only object of the kind visible in the room. She smiled as Orsino entered, and she

laid aside the volume as he sat down in his accustomed place.

"I thought you were not coming," she said.

"Why?"

"You always come at five. It is half-past to-day."

Orsino looked at his watch.

"Do you notice whether I come or not?" he asked.

Maria Consuelo glanced at his face, and laughed. "What have you been doing to-day?" she asked. "That is much more interesting."

"Is it? I am afraid not. I have been listening to those disagreeable things which are called truths by the people who say them. I have listened to two lectures delivered by two very intelligent men for my especial benefit. It seems to me that as soon as I make a good resolution it becomes the duty of sensible people to demonstrate that I am a fool."

"You are not in a good humour. Tell me all about it."

"And weary you with my grievances? No. Is Del Ferice coming this afternoon?"

"How can I tell? He does not come often."

"I thought he came almost every day," said Orsino gloomily.

He was disappointed, but Maria Consuelo did not understand what was the matter. She leaned forward in her low seat, her chin resting upon one hand, and her tawny eyes fixed on Orsino's.

"Tell me, my friend—are you unhappy? Can I do anything? Will you tell me?"

It was not easy to resist the appeal. Though the two had grown intimate of late, there had hitherto always been something cold and reserved behind her outwardly friendly manner. To-day she seemed suddenly willing to be different. Her easy, graceful attitude, her soft voice full of promised sympathy, above all the look in her strange eyes revealed a side of her character which Orsino had not suspected, and which affected him

in a way he could not have described.

Without hesitation he told her his story from beginning to end, simply, without comment, and without any of the cutting phrases which came so readily to his tongue on most occasions. She listened very thoughtfully to the end.

"Those things are not misfortunes," she said. "But they may be the beginnings of unhappiness. To be unhappy is worse than any misfortune. What right has your father to laugh at you? Because he never needed to do anything for himself, he thinks it absurd that his son should dislike the lazy life that is prepared for him. It is not reasonable,—it is not kind!"

"Yet he means to be both, I suppose," said Orsino bitterly.

"Oh, of course! People always mean to be the soul of logic and the paragon of charity! Especially where their own children are concerned."

Maria Consuelo added the last words with more feeling than seemed justified by her sympathy for Orsino's woes. The moment was perhaps favourable for asking a leading question about herself, and her answer might have thrown light on her problematic past. But Orsino was too busy with his own troubles to think of that, and the opportunity slipped by and was lost.

"You know now why I want to see Del Ferice," he said. "I cannot go to his house. My only chance of talking to him lies here."

"And that is what brings you? You are very flattering!"

"Do not be unjust! We all look forward to meeting our friends in heaven."

"Very pretty! I forgive you. But I am afraid that you will not meet Del Ferice. I do not think he has left the Chambers yet. There was to be a debate this afternoon in which he had to speak."

"Does he make speeches?"

"Very good ones; I have heard him."

"I have never been inside the Chambers," observed Orsino.

"You are not very patriotic. You might go there and ask for Del Ferice. You could see him without going to his house, without compromising your dignity."

"Why do you laugh?"

"Because it all seems to me so absurd. You know that you are perfectly free to go and see him when and where you will. There is nothing to prevent you. He is the one man of all others whose advice you need. He has an unexceptionable position in the world,—no doubt he has done strange things, but so have dozens of people whom you know—his present reputation is excellent, I say. And yet, because some twenty years ago, when you were a child, he held one opinion and your father held another, you are interdicted from crossing his threshold! If you can shake hands with him here, you can take his hand in his own house. Is not that true?"

"Theoretically, I dare say, but not in practice. You see it yourself. You have chosen one side from the first, and all the people on the other side know it. As a foreigner you are not bound to either, and you can know everybody in time, if you please. Society is not so prejudiced as to object to that. But because you begin with the Del Ferice in a very uncompromising way, it would take a long time for you to know the Montevarchi, for instance."

"Who told you that I was a foreigner?" asked Maria Consuelo, rather abruptly.

"You yourself——"

"That is good authority!" She laughed. "I do not remember—ah! because I do not speak Italian? You mean that? One may forget one's own language, or for that matter one may never have learned it."

"Are you Italian, then, madame?" asked Orsino, surprised that she should lead the conversation so directly to a point which he had supposed must be reached by a series of tactful approaches.

"Who knows? I am sure I do not.

- My father was Italian. Does that constitute nationality?"

"Yes. But the woman takes the nationality of her husband, I believe," said Orsino, anxious to hear more.

"Ah, yes,—poor Aranjuez!" Maria Consuelo's voice suddenly took that sleepy tone which Orsino had heard more than once. Her eyelids drooped a little and she lazily opened and shut her hand, and spread out the fingers and looked at them.

But Orsino was not satisfied to let the conversation drop at this point, and after a moment's pause he put a decisive question.

"And was Monsieur d'Aranjuez also Italian?" he asked.

"What does it matter?" she asked in the same indolent tone. "Yes, since you ask me, he was Italian, poor man."

Orsino was more and more puzzled. That the name did not exist in Italy he was almost convinced. He thought of the story of the Signor Aragno, who had fallen overboard in the south seas, and then he was suddenly aware that he could not believe in anything of the sort. Maria Consuelo did not betray a shade of emotion, either, at the mention of her deceased husband. She seemed absorbed in the contemplation of her hands. Orsino had not been rebuked for his curiosity, and would have asked another question if he had known how to frame it. An awkward silence followed. Maria Consuelo raised her eyes slowly and looked thoughtfully into Orsino's face.

"I see," she said at last. "You are curious. I do not know whether you have any right to be—have you?"

"I wish I had!" exclaimed Orsino thoughtlessly.

Again she looked at him in silence for some moments.

"I have not known you long enough," she said. "And if I had known you longer, perhaps it would not be different. Are other people curious, too? Do they talk about me?"

"The people I know do; but they do not know you. They see your name in the papers, as a beautiful Spanish princess. Yet everybody is aware that there is no Spanish nobleman of your name. Of course they are curious. They invent stories about you, which I deny. If I knew more, it would be easier."

"Why do you take the trouble to deny such things?"

She asked the question with a change of manner. Once more she leaned forward and her face softened wonderfully as she looked at him.

"Can you not guess?" he asked.

He was conscious of a very unusual emotion, not at all in harmony with the imaginary character he had chosen for himself and which he generally maintained with considerable success. Maria Consuelo was one person when she leaned back in her chair, laughing or idly listening to his talk, or repulsing the insignificant declarations of devotion which were not even meant to be taken altogether in earnest. She was pretty then, attractive, graceful, feminine, a little artificial, perhaps, and Orsino felt that he was free to like her or not, as he pleased, but that he pleased to like her for the present. She was quite another woman to-day, as she bent forward, her tawny eyes growing darker and more mysterious every moment, her auburn hair casting wonderful shadows upon her broad pale forehead, her lips not closed as usual, but slightly parted, her fragrant breath just stirring the quiet air Orsino breathed. Her features might be irregular. It did not matter. She was beautiful for the moment with a kind of beauty Orsino had never seen, and which produced a sudden and overwhelming effect upon him.

"Do you not know?" he asked again, and his voice trembled unexpectedly.

"Thank you," she said softly, and she touched his hand almost caressingly.

But when he would have taken it, she drew back instantly and was once

more the woman whom he saw every day, careless, indifferent, pretty.

"Why do you change so quickly?" he asked in a low voice, bending towards her. "Why do you snatch your hand away? Are you afraid of me?"

"Why should I be afraid? Are you dangerous?"

"You are. You may be fatal, for all I know."

"How foolish!" she exclaimed, with a quick glance.

"You are Madame d'Aranjuez, now," he answered. "We had better change the subject."

"What do you mean?"

"A moment ago you were Consuelo," he said boldly.

"Have I given you any right to say that?"

"A little."

"I am sorry. I will be more careful. I am sure I cannot imagine why you should think of me at all, unless when you are talking to me, and then I do not wish to be called by my Christian name. I assure you, you are never anything in my thoughts but His Excellency Prince Orsino Saracinesca, with as many titles after that as may belong to you."

"I have none," said Orsino.

Her speech irritated him strongly, and the illusion which had been so powerful a few moments earlier all but disappeared.

"Then you advise me to go and find Del Ferice at Monte Citorio," he observed.

"If you like." She laughed. "There is no mistaking your intention when you mean to change the subject," she added.

"You made it sufficiently clear that the other was disagreeable to you."

"I did not mean to do so."

"Then, in heaven's name, what do you mean, madame?" he asked, suddenly losing his head in his extreme annoyance.

Maria Consuelo raised her eyebrows in surprise. "Why are you so angry?" she asked. "Do you know that it is very rude to speak like that?"

"I cannot help it. What have I done to-day that you should torment me as you do?"

"I? I torment you? My dear friend, you are quite mad."

"I know I am. You make me so."

"Will you tell me how? What have I done? What have I said? You Romans are certainly the most extraordinary people. It is impossible to please you. If one laughs, you become tragic! If one is serious, you grow gay! I wish I understood you better."

"You will end by making it impossible for me to understand myself," said Orsino. "You say that I am changeable. Then what are you?"

"Very much the same to-day as yesterday," said Maria Consuelo calmly. "And I do not suppose that I shall be very different to-morrow."

"At least I will take my chance of finding that you are mistaken," said Orsino, rising suddenly and standing before her.

"Are you going?" she asked, as though she were surprised.

"Since I cannot please you."

"Since you will not."

"I do not know how."

"Be yourself, the same that you always are. You are affecting to be some one else to-day."

"I fancy it is the other way," answered Orsino, with more truth than he really owned to himself.

"Then I prefer the affectation to the reality."

"As you will, madame. Good evening."

He crossed the room to go out. She called him back.

"Don Orsino!"

He turned sharply round.

"Madame?"

Seeing that he did not move, she rose and went to him. He looked down into her face and saw that it was changed again.

"Are you really angry?" she asked. There was something girlish in the way she asked the question, and, for a moment, in her whole manner.

Orsino could not help smiling. But he said nothing.

"No, you are not," she continued. "I can see it. Do you know, I am very glad? It was foolish of me to tease you. You will forgive me? This once?"

"If you will give me warning the next time." He found that he was looking into her eyes.

"What is the use of warning?" she asked.

They were very close together, and there was a moment's silence. Suddenly Orsino forgot everything and bent down, clasping her in his arms and kissing her again and again. It was brutal, rough, senseless, but he could not help it.

Maria Consuelo uttered a short, sharp cry, more of surprise, perhaps, than of horror. To Orsino's amazement and confusion her voice was immediately answered by another, which was that of the dark and usually silent maid whom he had seen once or twice. The woman ran into the room, terrified by the cry she had heard.

"Madame felt faint in crossing the room, and was falling when I caught her," said Orsino, with a coolness that did him credit.

And, in fact, Maria Consuelo closed her eyes as he let her sink into the nearest chair. The maid fell on her knees beside her mistress and began chafing her hands.

"The poor Signora!" she exclaimed. "She should never be left alone! She has not been herself since the poor Signore died. You had better leave us, sir; I will put her to bed when she revives. It often happens, — pray do not be anxious!"

Orsino picked up his hat and left the room.

"Oh, it often happens, does it?" he said to himself as he closed the door softly behind him and walked down the corridor of the hotel.

He was more amazed at his own boldness than he cared to own. He had not supposed that scenes of this description produced themselves so

very unexpectedly, and, as it were, without any fixed intention on the part of the chief actor. He remembered that he had been very angry with Madame d'Aranjuez, that she had spoken half a dozen words, and that he had felt an irresistible impulse to kiss her. He had done so, and he thought with considerable trepidation of their next meeting. She had screamed, which showed that she was outraged by his boldness. It was doubtful whether she would receive him again. The best thing to be done, he thought, was to write her a very humble letter of apology, explaining his conduct as best he could. This did not accord very well with his principles, but he had already transgressed them in being so excessively hasty. Her eyes had certainly been provoking in the extreme, and it had been impossible to resist the expression on her lips. But at all events, he should have begun by kissing her hand, which she would certainly not have withdrawn again; then he might have put his arm round her and drawn her head to his shoulder. These were preliminaries in the matter of kissing which it was undoubtedly right to observe, and he had culpably neglected them. He had been abominably brutal, and he ought to apologise. Nevertheless, he would not have forfeited the recollection of that moment for all the other recollections of his life, and he knew it. As he walked along the street he felt a wild exhilaration such as he had never known before. He owned gladly to himself that he loved Maria Consuelo, and resolutely thrust away the idea that his boyish vanity was pleased by the snatching of a kiss.

Whatever the real nature of his delight might be it was for the time so sincere that he even forgot to light a cigarette in order to think over the circumstances.

Walking rapidly up the Corso he came to Piazza Colonna, and the glare of the electric light somehow recalled him to himself.



"Great speech of the Honourable Del Ferice!" yelled a newsboy in his ear. "Ministerial crisis! Horrible murder of a grocer!"

Orsino mechanically turned to the right in the direction of the Chambers. Del Ferice had probably gone home, since his speech was already in print. But fate had ordained otherwise. Del Ferice had corrected his proofs on the spot and had lingered to talk with his friends before going home. Not that it mattered much, for Orsino could have found him as well on the following day. His brougham was standing in front of the great entrance and he himself was shaking hands with a tall man under the light of the lamps. Orsino went up to him.

"Could you spare me a quarter of an hour?" asked the young man in a voice constrained by excitement. He felt that he was embarked at last upon his great enterprise.

Del Ferice looked up in some aston-

ishment. He had reason to dread the quarrelsome disposition of the Saracinesca as a family, and he wondered what Orsino wanted.

"Certainly, certainly, Don Orsino," he answered, with a particularly bland smile. "Shall we drive, or at least sit in my carriage? I am a little fatigued with my exertions to-day."

The tall man bowed and strolled away, biting the end of an unlit cigar.

"It is a matter of business," said Orsino, before entering the carriage. "Can you help me to try my luck,—in a very small way—in one of the building-enterprises you manage?"

"Of course I can, and will," answered Del Ferice, more and more astonished. "After you, my dear Don Orsino, after you," he repeated, pushing the young man into the brougham. "Quiet streets, till I stop you," he said to the footman, as he himself got in.

*(To be continued.)*

## VILLAGE LIFE.

THE approach of a General Election, a potent factor in which will be the votes of agricultural labourers, has awakened unusual interest in their fortunes. Politicians vie with each other in holding out tempting baits to the labourer. The most urgent need of modern policy, they explain, is the improvement of his condition, his emancipation from the tyranny of squire and parson and from the dull monotony of a life of toil without amusement and without hope. With a zeal not always according to knowledge the Press takes up the cry. Special Commissioners,—sharp, clever penmen in populous cities pent—are sent post-haste to scour rural England, and report in a series of telling articles upon its condition, its people, its habits and ways of thought, its aspirations, its possibilities. A few cross-country drives with communicative ostlers, a few gossips with old women at cottage doors, with labourers at the village inn, or with Radical cobblers over their work; and your smart newspaper-man knows all about it. He gets to the bottom of things at once. We who live in the country and know something about the English labourer,—the slow movement of his ideas, his extreme reticence if questioned, and his invariable suspiciousness of strangers—are astonished at the facility with which the correspondent has “tapped” him. We marvel how cocksure the said correspondent is upon points which after years of experience are not clear to us. Still more do we marvel at the utterances of politicians,—even men “of light and leading”—upon village life as seen through political spectacles. When men of Cabinet rank see visions of fields, now deserted, “waving with golden grain” if their

party returns to power, or of labourers happy, contented, and hopeful under the fairy gift of Village Councils, we ask in amazement, Do they know that they are talking nonsense? or are they deliberately trying how much the public will swallow? And when men who know little or nothing of country life and have never lived among us,—men whose whole interests have till only the other day lain far away from Hodge and his fortunes—unblushingly tell us that their one desire is to do him justice (for the trifling consideration of his vote), we remember “Three acres and a cow,” and wonder by what false or foolish hopes our labouring friends are now to be beguiled in their longing for improvement.

Improvement? Yes, I know there is great need of it. I am no optimist who thinks that our labourers are as well off as they ought to be and might be, and that all is for the best under the best possible social arrangements. I know that the labourer’s life wants prospect, variety, and hope; and that in too many cases it is a dreary vista of toil ending in the workhouse. I know the sterling qualities of the English labourer: his shrewd common-sense, his native courtesy (when not spoilt by agitators), his patient endurance; and I rejoice to see those qualities rewarded (as they are much oftener than might be supposed) by a rise in life and by a position of independence. And it is precisely because I recognise that his position needs improvement and wish that he should improve it, that I do not regard the depopulation of our villages, of which some speak as if it were an evil to be remedied at all costs, as an unmixed disadvantage. So far as it means that the refuse of the agricultural popula-

tion crowd into towns only to swell the ranks of the unemployed and provide material for Mr. Booth's experiments, it is no doubt an evil for society in general, if not for the villages which thus get rid of superfluous encumbrances. If it means desertion of the land by those whose labour is necessary for cultivation, it is an evil for the villages themselves and for agriculture. But so far as it means that the best and most energetic young men, who have stuff in them and capacity for getting on, are taking their labour to more profitable markets, it is surely a satisfactory sign that there are other openings for the labourer who is fit to fill them, and that a man who has it in him to be something better than a farm-hand need not remain bound to the soil. One is sorry, no doubt, to see the pick of our young men going off to the railway, or the police-force, or to shops, or into the army; but can we blame them? Can we wish to keep them? They have seen perhaps in neighbouring cottages, on the one hand a pensioner from the army or the police, or a retired servant from some London business, spending the evening of life in comfortable independence, and on the other an elderly labourer getting past his work and slowly drifting into pauperism. That is an object-lesson that speaks for itself to a young fellow with any heart in him; and it is only because many young men of the labouring class have so little of that quality, and so little capacity for sticking to anything, that they remain at home at all.

The assumption that depopulation of villages is an evil urgently needing remedy must thus, as it seems, be taken with some qualification; and so too must be the assumption underlying much that is said or written about the agricultural labourer, that he is prevented from rising by adverse social circumstances. To listen to some people, one might suppose that, if the squire and the parson could be got rid of, the labourer would rise like a cork

to comfort and independence. But such social reformers, in their list of obstacles which prevent the rise of the agricultural labourer, omit what nine times out of ten is the greatest obstacle of all,—the labourer himself. No worker for wages, it may be safely said, will ever better his position, be society reconstituted as it may, without thrift, self-denial, and temperance. In every village there are men who have thus risen; but they have been steady, saving, temperate men from the moment they began to earn man's wages. Their contemporaries who spent their surplus earnings at the public-house (pouring, as some do, four, five, or six shillings a week down their throats), and married at five or six and twenty with nothing laid by, remain where they were, "on the land"; sinking, unless they can shake off their drinking habits, into the ruck of supernumerary labourers, employed when work is plentiful, but out of work whenever it is scarce. If parsons and squires were done away with and Village Councils established to-morrow, what would that do for these men? Would it give them a better chance of employment? Would it make them more worth employing? I do not forget that there are also steady, sober, respectable men who do not rise, and never will rise, from the ranks of field-labour; for whom life is often a hard struggle, and the prospects of old age uncertain. I wish it were otherwise; I wish that wages were high enough to enable steady men to make better provision for old age, and remove all fear of the workhouse as the close of a life of honest toil. But what is to ensure this most desirable result? Getting rid of the squire,—the best employer of labour in many a parish? Turning out the parson,—the one resident who is bound by the mere fact of his being there to devote himself to the service of the people? Returning Mr. Gladstone to power, to be used immediately for purposes for which the English labourer cares nothing? These are the nostrums that

are now being so well advertised among the rural voters ; bread pills, most of them, or idle incantations, useless for the present need :

————— Skilful leech  
Mutters no spells o'er sore that needs the knife.<sup>1</sup>

No ; there is a deeper question behind,—a question which the Friends of Labour for the most part conveniently ignore—and that is the restoration of the agricultural industry, paralysed as it is by the simple fact that for some years past it has been impossible to grow corn at a profit. There is the kernel of the whole question. Fruit-growing, jam-making, dairy-farming, horse-breeding, poultry-keeping—all these in favourable circumstances may come in to help the farmer. They may or may not be practicable on his land ; it is by no means certain that they will always pay ; at best they are subsidiary to his main business. But one thing, and one only, will restore confidence to agriculture ; one thing only will enable the farmer to pay better permanent wages to his labourers,—and that is a permanent rise in the price of corn. Till this is reached, wages must be low : so long as wages are low, men will migrate to better themselves ; and not even Village Councils or Disestablishment will make village life happier or more attractive.

Let it not be thought however that those who object to certain prevalent nostrums for arresting the decay of village life are opposed to all attempts at improving the labourer's condition. All that we object to is that he should be misled by false hopes. We cordially welcome everything that tends to his moral and physical well-being, and to greater brightness and happiness in his life. Allotments, reading-rooms, entertainments, savings-banks, cricket-clubs,—anything that helps thrift, or provides rational amusement, must commend itself to reasonable men.

<sup>1</sup> Sophocles, *Ajax*, 582 (Plumptre's translation).

The modern Friends of Labour too often write and speak as if all such things were a new discovery of the party now desirous of office ; ignorantly or wilfully ignoring the means by which the clergy and earnest laity have long been striving to benefit their neighbours. Only those who have thus striven know the difficulty of the task. It is easy for platform-orators or newspaper-writers to talk about starting this or that agency for good in our villages. But before blaming those who have not started such things, or who have failed to keep them going, let our critics come and try. Let them realise the stupendous *vis inertiae* of country folk ; let them find out that it is one thing to collect young fellows together for a club or any similar object, and quite another to get them to keep to anything when the novelty has worn off. The one recreation that never seems to pall is beer and the public-house ; and till we can hit upon something that shall rival these attractions, nothing that we do to amuse and interest the labourer will be more than temporarily successful. I do not mean to imply that drunkenness is the labourer's joy. There is very much less of it than there used to be, and many regular frequenters of the public-house never get drunk. But the public-house is the labourer's club, the place where he is at ease among his mates, and can say what he thinks to men who think like himself without restraint from the presence of his social superiors. On the tap-room bench he is free and independent ; no one is patronising him or treating him like a child ; he amuses himself as he pleases and when he pleases. The village concert with " the quality " in the front seats ; the reading-room superintended by the parson ; the lecture or the technical instruction class,—all these are well in their way for an occasional variety ; but for a continuance, the social independence and free-and-easy talk of the public-house have the greater charm. If the public-house itself could be so refined

as to be more of a club and reading-room and less of a mere drinking-shop; if its beer were light and wholesome, and its customers could, if they preferred, be served with tea and coffee instead; perhaps it might even become a civilising and elevating agency in village life. But this is Utopian so long as public-houses are one and all "tied" to breweries, and licenses are generally granted to two or three times as many houses as are sufficient for the legitimate wants of a village. I am no fanatic advocate of total abstinence, nor do I believe in making men sober by Act of Parliament. But no one can live in the country, and go in and out among the people without becoming profoundly convinced that drink is their great curse, and the cause direct or indirect of three-fourths of the poverty and misery that exist; and that, this being so, far too many temptations are put in the way of men who in self-control are little better than children, and require protection against themselves. I do not grudge Hodge his glass or two of beer, if taken wholesomely at meals, and not at odd times upon an empty stomach; nor his evening chat at the public-house, so long as it does not send him home fuddled and quarrelsome. But I fear that, as things are at present, beer and the public-house have in the majority of cases a demoralising influence upon him.

A great deal has been made of the shortcomings of the clergy, and the labourers are being diligently taught to mistrust the parson,—I presume with an eye to Disestablishment in the future. I am not concerned now to defend my order. I will only say this with respect to the alleged hatred felt by labourers for the clergy, that so far as my own experience goes I have seldom met with anything but civility and cordiality from parishioners of the labouring class. And with respect to the alleged grievance that the parsons like to get everything into their own hands, all I can say is that many of them would be only too glad

if their parishioners would take a little more trouble upon themselves, instead of expecting everything to be done for them. Some country clergy may be fussy, interfering, narrow-minded; it would be strange indeed if we were all perfect. But take them all round, I know no body of men more conscientiously bent upon doing all the good they can; and that from no unworthy motive, such as the capturing of votes at an election, but from real interest in the welfare of the very men who are being so carefully taught to dislike and mistrust them. I say this the more freely, because I have not always been one of them. But if, in academic days, I was ever tempted to think lightly of my brethren in country parishes, a closer acquaintance with their work and character has entirely dispelled the thought.

Allotments and small holdings are sometimes vaunted as a panacea. But the latter cannot be established all at once. A peasant proprietary,—undoubtedly a great source of stability, as shown in the case of France—cannot be artificially created by simply dividing large holdings among labourers who may or may not be fit to manage a farm for themselves; it must be the slow growth of suitable, social, and economic conditions, utilised by industry, thrift, and intelligence. And as for allotments, which some persons seem to regard as a recent discovery of Radical politicians, the supposed difficulty of obtaining them is largely imaginary. Even forty years ago they were a matter of course in many country parishes, and few are now without them. In most places nowadays a labouring man can get, in the shape of a cottage-garden, or a field-garden, or both, as much ground as he can cultivate in his leisure hours; and a very substantial help does he find it towards the maintenance of his family. I speak, of course, of the steady sober men; upon the idle tippling loafer allotments, or anything else that can be devised for his im-



provement, will probably be thrown away. He will give you his vote, perhaps, if you promise him sufficient pickings out of other men's property; but he will do you no credit afterwards. Allotments are good so far as they go, and no doubt help to make the labourer more contented. But they cannot satisfy the discontent which comes of desire for larger wages; they cannot still the natural and partly laudable unrest which drives the more energetic and capable young men from their native fields to better their chances of earning money. Do what we can, we shall not persuade such men to stop at home, nor is it perhaps well that we should. They pass out from among us, and we see them no more. Some rise and prosper; many of them never find their El Dorado; many learn by bitter

experience that poverty is as hard to bear in the town as in the country. But if they are restless, they must go, and fight their battle for themselves.

The problems of agricultural life are well worth the attention of statesmen; for the prosperity of agriculture, and the welfare of those who till the soil, are vital to our country. But the question must be grappled with in a far-seeing and statesmanlike spirit. If the only thing that rouses interest in the labourer's condition is an ignoble scramble for his vote on the eve of a General Election, if the labourer himself is to become, like unhappy Ireland, a shuttlecock between rival office-seekers, the problem will remain unsolved, at least for this generation.

T. L. PAPILLON.

HORACE.<sup>1</sup>

THERE is a scene in *Silas Marner* which, though not perhaps the fittest introduction in the world to an article on classic poetry, expresses so well the feeling which is often aroused in us by a particular species of criticism, that we must crave the indulgence of our readers for introducing it on the present occasion. Says Ben Winthrop, the wheelwright, to Solomon Macey, the clerk: "Ah, Mr. Macey, you and me are two folks; when I've got a pot of good ale I like to swallow it, and do my inside good, i'stead o' smelling and staring at it to see if I can't find fault wi' the brewing."

It may be thought that if we carried out Mr. Winthrop's principle to the letter we should find it difficult to justify any kind of criticism whatever. But the reader must take note that this rustic philosopher makes it a condition that the ale shall be good. That point must be established first; and this much being conceded, he was evidently of opinion that further and more minute examination was only waste of breath. We must confess that some such thoughts as these have occasionally passed through our minds when reading reviews of great writers on whom the verdict of mankind has long since been pronounced: on whom the world has looked and seen that they were good; and whose power over our hearts and minds no change of taste can materially affect while literature and civilisation last. To point out the beauties and the blemishes of even the greatest poets whose reputation has endured for ages is a work not unworthy of the highest literary faculties, and one that may be

performed with advantage for the benefit of each succeeding generation by writers more in harmony with contemporary thought and taste than those of an earlier period. By this kind of criticism both the poet and the reader profit, and it is one of which we ought never to grow tired. But there is another kind of which we must own to have become somewhat intolerant, and that is the inquiry into the originality, the sincerity, the morality, and what not, of the bright particular stars which have shone so long in the literary firmament, and whose lustre can never be dimmed by any discoveries which are likely to be made now touching their possession of these qualities. Nobody derives less pleasure from Virgil because he is indebted to Ennius and Theocritus and Apollonius Rhodius, to say nothing of Homer. And even much of the accepted criticism on Homer himself seems to point to the existence of a previous ballad poetry which Homer wove into a whole, not sometimes without visible indication of the process. If the Homeric poems are the work of a single hand, Homer was not the first who sang the wrath of Achilles and the fate of Hector.

Is it not reasonable to suppose that all the great masterpieces of literature have been preceded by imperfect and desultory efforts in the same direction? Greek tragedy and comedy, the Roman Epic and the Roman Satire, as we know them in their full bloom, had all been preceded by cruder endeavours of which few remains have been preserved. May we not take it for granted that before any kind of literature culminates in that perfect form which perpetuates its existence and in virtue of which it is called classic, it has put forth many previous shoots which never arrived at ma-

<sup>1</sup> *Horace and the Elegiac Poets*; by W. Y. Sellar, M.A., LL.D., late Professor of Humanity in the University of Edinburgh, formerly Fellow of Oriel College. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1892.

turity, destined only to enrich subsequent labourers in the same field who have naturally and legitimately incorporated in their own more finely wrought works whatever they found worthy of preservation in the ruder composition of their predecessors? By some such process at all events the great works of antiquity were built up; and it seems rather late in the day now to be charging their authors with plagiarism, more especially when we remember that English literature is no stranger to the practice, and that its most conspicuous ornament was also the most addicted to it.

These reflections are suggested by a question which has recently been raised again in a quarter where we are accustomed to look for liberal and graceful scholarship, and that is the originality of the poet Horace, who according to a writer in the *Quarterly Review* was more deeply indebted to Lucilius than has been generally supposed, or than even Professor Sellar, our greatest authority on the Roman poets of the Republican and Augustan eras, appears to have recognised. This position is supported with much ingenuity, a copious array of evidence and a considerable display of learning, leaving however the impression, though doubtless an incorrect one, that the reviewer had either not read or had forgotten what Professor Sellar himself says upon the subject in the first volume of his work<sup>1</sup> published nearly thirty years ago. He there covers the whole ground now traversed by the *Quarterly* reviewer, and scarcely misses a single one of the points to which the latter calls attention. In the chapter on Lucilius he gives the earlier Roman satirist full credit for all that the reviewer claims for him. Horace's obligations to him are allowed in full; but he does not attach quite the same importance to them as does the reviewer.

The truth seems to be that whatever Horace may have borrowed in the shape of incident or anecdote, or even suggestion, from those who went before

him,—a question, as it seems to us, of comparative insignificance—his satire in itself was all his own and peculiar to himself. Persius contrasts him with Lucilius in a well-known passage:—

Secuit Lucilius urbem,  
Te Lupe, te Muci, et genuinum fregit in  
illis.  
Omne vafer vitium rident Flaccus amico  
Tangit, et admissus circum præcordia  
ludit.<sup>1</sup>

Now this is exactly the satire of Addison with whom Horace has so often been compared. If we take Thackeray's description of Addison in the *Lectures on the Humourists* it may stand *mutatis mutandis* for a description of Horace. Nor is a strong resemblance wanting between Horace and Thackeray himself. A great part of the *Book of Snobs* is compiled quite in the spirit of the Roman Satirist—Jenkins the bore, Wiggle the lady-killer, the people who are for ever speculating about their neighbours' incomes, the worship of rank and riches, are all essentially Horatian, as well as the Tory Foxhunters in *The Freeholder* and the coffee-house politician so deliciously described in No. 403 of *The Spectator*. Horace's obligations to Lucilius do not detract in the smallest degree from his title to originality as the founder of that kind of satire which has been most to the taste of modern time. If Lucilius was the father of political satire, Horace was just as certainly the father of social satire. But if we once begin to trace the various rivers of literature to their respective sources we are soon lost among primeval swamps and forests. In the meantime there stands Horace,—*terres atque rotundus*—a poet who has delighted twenty centuries, and will delight twenty more if the world lasts so long. Why should we be so curious to know what he is made of? If he has rescued from oblivion portions of

<sup>1</sup> And yet arch Horace, when he strove to mend,  
Probed every foible of his smiling friend,  
Played lightly round and round the peccant part,  
And won unfelt an entrance to the heart.

<sup>1</sup> *Roman Ports of the Republic*, 1863.

the work of writers who would otherwise have perished, we should rather be grateful to him than reproachful. At all events we have got Horace, and we have not got Lucilius. A wise man will take him as he finds him, to do his inside good without asking too many questions about the brewing.

We must remember too that both in the Satires, Epistles, and Odes, Horace was doing what we have described in the beginning of this article, imparting form and finish to what had hitherto been rude and desultory. Mark Pattison's introduction to the *Essay on Man* may be read together with Mr. Sellar's new published *Essay on Horace* in illustration of the statement. Mr. Sellar dwells on it repeatedly. "Horace," he says (p. 105), "saw that fervour of feeling and a great spirit which were the gifts of the old writers were not enough to produce immortal works like those produced by the genius of Greece. . . . The work which had to be done in his time could not be done by those powers alone. That work was to find, at last, the mastery of form, rhythm, and style, the perfection and moderation of workmanship which would secure for the efforts of Roman genius as sure a passport to immortality as had been secured for the master-pieces of Greek literature." In a word, Horace represented and led the literary craving after form which followed an age of lawless and licentious exuberance; these words are Mr. Pattison's who, laying down very justly that form is the condition of all art, describes Pope as the greatest literary artist except Gray which our language has produced. Mr. Sellar, we presume, would say that Horace was the greatest literary artist which the Latin language had produced, not perhaps excepting even Virgil. The admirers of Horace might well be satisfied to rest his claims to distinction on this achievement alone. But we may go further than this. When, after a series of efforts in any one department of literature, vigorous perhaps and even passionate, but raw,

harsh, and undisciplined, the man at last appears who takes up the work and succeeds where his predecessors failed, brings symmetry and regularity out of disproportion and disorder, harmony out of discord, and chiselled beauty out of the half-wrought marble, such a man we say is a creator and deserves all the honours of an original writer. If there are any who prefer the rough blocks to the finished palace we would only say to them what Dr. Johnson said, when told by somebody that he preferred Donne's satires to Pope's adaptation, "I cannot help that, Sir."

So much then of Horace and Lucilius. Nobody can possibly recognise the obligations of the junior to the senior more fully than Mr. Sellar; but he sees clearly enough that it is no matter of reproach to him. The question of Horace's "sincerity" is closely allied with the above; and here again Mr. Sellar's advocacy is triumphant. That scenes and characters in the Satires are not so much direct reproductions of particular incidents or persons as generalisations from what he had witnessed in the varied experience of life may be true enough. He may never have dined with Nasidienus or have met that famous bore in the Via Sacra. He may have taken parts of his descriptions from Lucilius, but Horace we may be sure must have known many such hosts as Nasidienus and must have been present at many similar entertainments. He must have met in his time many such nuisances as the troublesome gentleman from whom he was delivered by Apollo; and moreover in this satire Horace had a special purpose to serve,—to show up the absurdities and falsehoods current in Roman society about Mæcenæ's "set," as they are current in all societies about similar exclusive circles. The street Arab in *Sybil* who professed to tell his pal what the "nobs" had for supper was not wider of the mark than the gossips who swarmed at Rome just as they now swarm in London. The bore in Lucilius may have suggested to him a

very good way of carrying this purpose into effect. But why linger over this kind of criticism? Did Addison ever see Will Wimble, or that excellent inn-keeper who was three yards in girth and the best Church of England man on the road? Did either Dick Ivy or Lord Potato ever dine with Smollett?

It is sometimes asked whether Horace was sincere in his satire, in his patriotism, in his amatory poems, and in his professed love of nature and the country. As for his satire he was as sincere as a gentleman need be. He had not the *sæva indignatio* of Carlyle, or Swift, or Juvenal. How could he have? He could not break butterflies on wheels. But he was as sincere as Addison. In his *Meditations in Westminster Abbey* Addison says that when he meets with the grief of parents on a tombstone his heart melts with compassion. It did not melt very much, Thackeray thought, and we perfectly agree with him. Are we to suppose that Thackeray himself was inspired by any burning wrath when he drew his pen upon the snobs? Horace had probably just as much and just as little real anger in his heart when he laughed at Catus and Tigellinus. He was sincere enough in ridiculing whatever was ridiculous; and in the Satires at all events he aimed at nothing more than this. Mr. Sellar thinks that in the Epistles we see Horace in the character of a moral teacher. But we should question whether this object stood first with him in the composition of his letters. Horace had a turn for moralising. We see it everywhere; and the *savoir vivre* and *savoir faire* are what he was specially fond of dwelling upon. He gives excellent advice to young men; and is evidently rather vain of his own knowledge of society, and of the way to succeed in it.

Quo tandem pacto deceat majoribus uti.

This is the burden of his song, and whenever he recurs to it his name is Horatius, and his foot is on his native

heath. But of moral philosophy in the stricter sense of the term we do not see that the Epistles contain much. They are letters which a highly cultivated and accomplished man of the world, whose vocation was literature and whose tastes led him towards ethics, might be expected to write to congenial spirits, whether statesmen, lawyers, or men of letters. But his philosophy is the practical philosophy which lies upon the surface, which most men who combine intellectual power with common sense are prepared to follow, and which has little to do with the learning of the schools. Sir George Trevelyan says that his uncle, Lord Macaulay, was fond of pacing the cloisters of Trinity discoursing "The picturesque but somewhat esoteric philosophy which it pleased him to call by the name of metaphysics." We should say that if we substitute moral philosophy for metaphysics this was what Horace was fond of doing.

Horace's patriotism was also of the common sense species. If he could not have the Republic he would make the best of the Empire. He was no irreconcilable. He would not waste his life in sighing like Lucan over a fallen cause and a political system which could never be recalled, and which it is not certain that it was desirable to recall. He must have seen that the two great parties into which the Republic was divided, and which in its better days kept the balance between order and liberty, had gradually degenerated into selfish factions with scarcely the semblance of a principle between them. Was it really the part of a patriot to hope for the restoration of senatorial or parliamentary government? Was not an enlightened despotism a good exchange for Marius and Sulla? Whether any such thoughts passed through Horace's mind or not, he accepted the defeat of his own party as an accomplished fact and with considerable equanimity, and was quite ready to pray for Augustus as the saviour of society. The feeling which must have been entertained by many



educated and thoughtful Romans, if not by the whole upper and middle class who had gone through a century of revolutions, is expressed in the words of Virgil:—

Di patrii, Indigetes, et Romule Vestaque  
mater,  
Quæ Tuscum Tiberim et Romana Palatia  
servas,  
Hunc saltem everso juvenem succurrere  
sæclo  
Ne prohibete !

That was the end of the whole matter. The first necessity for Rome was the restoration of law, order, and permanent tranquillity. One hand alone seemed capable of ensuring these blessings, and Horace, and Virgil, and the other leading men of letters at Rome became its willing instruments.

Professor Sellar divides Horace's Odes into (1) The National, Religious, and Ethical Odes ; (2) The lighter Poems in the Greek Measure, *ἑρωτικά* and *συμπотικά*, and (3) The Occasional Poems of Horace's own life and experience. The National Odes express the sentiments referred to in the above paragraph. But Mr. Sellar does not bestow unqualified commendation on them. He thinks that the *dulcedo otii* spoken of by Tacitus carried Horace and other honest Imperialists a little too far. In the second ode of the Fourth Book he detects the first notes of that servile adulation "which was the bane of the next century." Of course we must all admit that settled order, security for life and property, all the conditions in fact under which alone the ordinary business of civilised communities can be conducted, have sometimes to be purchased at a great price. And so it was at Rome. The defence of those who paid it is that nothing else was possible. The mischief was already done. The Roman aristocracy and the Roman populace between them had made free institutions unworkable. Cicero pinned all his hopes on the equestrian order, much as Sir Robert Peel did afterwards on the middle classes. But it was too late at Rome. Public spirit and politi-

cal faith were dead, drowned in the sea of blood which the great factions had poured out. There was no help for it. Concurrently with this revolution began the decay of Roman character, and the so-called "adulation" which has been so much complained of by modern writers was only what might have been expected. Moreover a great part of it was purely formal, and meant no more than the words in the liturgy, "Our most religious and gracious Sovereign," while part of it was legitimately based upon an article in the Pagan creed which even Tacitus did not entirely reject. It seems to us that Mr. Sellar's use of the word "adulation" is a little inconsistent with what he says elsewhere of the deification of the Emperor.

It is in the Odes expressive of national and imperial sentiment, that we seem to find most of real meaning in the religious language of Horace. The analogy between Jove in Heaven and Augustus on Earth is often hinted at ; and the ground of this analogy is indicated by the emphatic stress laid on the triumph of Jove over the Giants,

Clari Giganteo triumpho (iii. 1).

It is the supremacy of order in the world of nature and human affairs which the imagination of Horace sees personified in that Jove,

Qui terram inertem, qui mare temperat  
Ventosum, et urbes, regnaque tristia,  
Divosque mortalesque turbas  
Imperio regit unus æquo (iii. 4).

Augustus is regarded as the minister and vice-regent on earth of this supreme power,—

Te minor laetum reget æquus orbem—  
and it is on this ground that a divine function is attributed to him.

If it was the popular belief that great heroes and statesmen were admitted to the company of the gods after death, it was a very short step from this belief to the conception of the head of the Roman Empire, the ruler of the modern world, as a god designate, and entitled therefore even before death to some kind of worship.

Of Horace's own religious belief he makes no secret. He was at heart a Lucretian. But he looked on the poetical superstitions of the Pagan world with the eye of a man of taste; much as many men at the present day may regard the saints and angels of the Romish Church, which bring mankind into such close communion with another world and appeal so powerfully to the imagination. Horace could not have been insensible to the charm. He did not fail, says Mr. Sellar,—

To recognise in the religious forms and beliefs of the past a salutary power to heal some of the evils of the present, and also a material by which his lyrical art could move the deeper sympathies and charm the fancy of his contemporaries. Nor need we suppose the feeling out of which his world of supernatural beings and agencies is recreated altogether insincere. Though the actual course of his life may be regulated in accordance with the negative conclusions of the understanding, the imagination of a poet like Horace and Lucretius is moved to the recognition of some transcendent power and agency, hidden in the world and yet sometimes apparent on the surface, which it associates with some concern for the course of nature and human affairs, and even of individual destiny. It is natural for the poet or artist to embody the suggestion of this mysterious feeling which gives its transcendent quality to his poetry or art, in the forms of traditional belief into which he breathes new life.

Horace might have been conscious of some such feeling as is so beautifully expressed in these well-known lines :

The intelligible forms of ancient poets,  
The fair humanities of old religion,  
The power, the beauty, and the majesty,  
That had their haunts in dale, or piny  
mountain,  
Or forest by slow stream, or pebbly spring,  
Or chasms and watery depths ; all these  
have vanish'd.  
They live no longer in the faith of reason !  
But still the heart doth need a language,  
still  
Doth the old instinct bring back the old  
names.  
And to yon starry world they now are  
gone,  
Spirits or gods, that used to share this earth

With man as with their friend ; and to  
the lover  
Yonder they move, from yonder visible sky  
Shoot influence down : and even at thi-  
day  
'Tis Jupiter that brings whate'er is great,  
And Venus who brings everything that's  
fair.

Along with the apology for the Empire which the literature of the day was called on to supply was the further object of reviving a belief in the old Italian religion and the old Latin deities. How exquisitely Virgil performed his share of the task no scholar requires to be told. But he was less under the influence of Greek ideas than Horace. And there is a reality and "a reverential piety" in his treatment of the subject, which we miss in the lyric poet, who "surrounds the gods and goddesses of Italy with the associations of Greek art in poetry." It was because he found these divinities in his favourite Greek authors that he was willing to people the groves and valleys of Italy with the same order of beings. Mr. Sellar is seen at his best in this part of his subject.

Horace's poetical conscience,—if we may use the phrase—held him clear of all blame in writing as he did of the nymphs and the Fauns, of Pan and Bacchus. He lived, we may believe, like many other eminent men of letters, two lives. Walking about the streets of Rome, playing at ball, looking on at the jugglers, or dining with Mæcenas, he was the shrewd man of the world, the Epicurean sceptic to whom the creed of his ancestors was foolishness. Far away amid the solitary scenes of nature, other thoughts and other ideas may have taken possession of him. He may have asked himself whether the old mythology was not, after all, something more than a beautiful dream ; whether the forces of nature might not sometimes assume the shapes which religion had assigned to them ; and whether such a belief was not more soothing to the human spirit than the cold negations

of the atheistic philosophy. Then it is that, as he strolls along the Sabine valley or approaches the Bandusian fountain, the *genius loci* casts its spell upon him, and he hears the reed of Faunus piping in the distant hills and catches a glimpse of the Naiad as she rises from the sacred spring.

It is not difficult to believe that Horace may at times have projected himself into the past with sufficient force of imagination to bring himself under the influence of the old faith, and to prevent his recognition of the Pagan deities from being open to any charge of insincerity. Or, if we reject this hypothesis, there is nothing discreditable to Horace in supposing that he merely took up the rural traditions where he found them, and used their more picturesque and graceful elements as materials for poetry. He must have known that whatever he wrote in this manner would be read by the light of his avowed scepticism, and that, as nobody could be deceived by it, so nobody would suspect him of hypocrisy. We should prefer to believe however that Horace was at times accessible to the reflection that there might be more things in the world than were dreamed of in his philosophy, and that however much he may have disbelieved in the intelligible forms of old religion, he may not have been entirely devoid of some sympathy with the religion of nature.

The amatory and convivial poems of Horace speak for themselves. Nobody ever supposed that in writing of the Lalages, Næras, and Glyceras, who were asked to the elegant little supper-parties given by the Roman men of wit and pleasure, Horace was using the language of real passion, which he was probably incapable of feeling. But Mr. Sellar scouts the notion that these poems were merely literary studies addressed to imaginary personages. He thinks that some of them, like the scenes and characters in the Satires, may be generalised from Horace's experience not to represent individuals; But he be-

lieves that many of them were well known to the poet, though his relations with them may have been Platonic. He goes further than this and thinks that the women themselves "were refined and accomplished ladies leading a somewhat independent but quite decorous life." What then made them so difficult of access? Why do we hear so much of the janitors, and the bolts and bars, and the windows? That many of them were educated and refined women and capable of inspiring gentlemen and scholars with the most ardent affection we may learn from Catullus and Tibullus. But there is never any talk of marriage with them. No: it is pretty clear to what class they belonged, and Horace was not the man to break his heart for any dozen such. Women in his eyes were playthings, and no sensible man ought to give himself a moment's uneasiness about the best of them. For good wine he had a much more sincere respect. He held with Cratinus that no water-drinker could write poetry. He resembles Addison again in both these particulars; in his high opinion of the flask and his low opinion of the sex. But he does not resemble him at all in another characteristic which Mr. Sellar thinks is one of his most strongly marked traits; his love of nature and of country life,—“The dream of Roman poets,” as Newman says, “from Virgil to Juvenal, and the reward of Roman statesmen from Cincinnatus to Pliny.”

How any doubt can have arisen with regard to Horace's sincerity when he writes on these subjects passes our comprehension. A man who only pretends to be a lover of the country never ventures beyond safe generalities. Horace specifies each tree, streamlet, and hill with the touch of one who knew them intimately; he had a Roman's eye for the picturesque, and reproduces it in his verse with an easy accuracy which nothing but long and loving contemplation could have enabled him to attain. He differs from Virgil no doubt to this extent,—

and it is a very important difference—that while Horace loved the beauties of nature Virgil loved nature herself. Virgil loved the country like Wordsworth, Horace like Thomson. There is nothing to show that Horace took the same pleasure as Virgil did in natural history, or in contemplating the operations of husbandry. But he never pretends that he does. In the second epode he is not laughing at such tastes; he seems simply to be illustrating the ruling passion exemplified probably in the behaviour of some well-known character at Rome, who was perhaps just then the subject of conversation in Horace's set. The sincerest lover of country life would be the first to ridicule this affected enthusiasm. The genuine worshipper of the rural gods would be irritated and disgusted by this desecration of his idol; he would feel his sanctuary polluted and vulgarised by the intrusive admiration of this cockney tradesman thinking it a fine thing to prate about the pleasures of the country and especially about country sports. This no doubt was the offence of which Alphius had been guilty, and which had been duly reported to Horace by one of his comrades. And the second epode was the consequence. To suppose that it was really meant as a covert satire upon country life seems little short of monstrous. It was exactly the reverse; it was a satire upon the sham admiration of it, prompted by an outrage on the real.

But whatever difference of opinion may exist with regard to Horace's originality and sincerity little or none is to be found on the question of his style. In his Satires and Epistles he did for Latin verse composition what Addison did for English prose composition. This is Mr. Sellar's dictum. "It was as great a triumph of art to bend the stately Latin hexameter into a flexible instrument for the use of his *musa pedestris* as to have been the inventor of a prose style equal to that of Addison or Montaigne. The

metrical success which Horace obtained in an attempt in which Lucilius absolutely failed is almost as remarkable as that obtained in his lyrical metres." Here then at all events Horace has an indisputable claim to originality. At the same time it must be remembered that Horace had greater difficulties to contend with in bringing down verse than Addison experienced in bringing down prose, to the level of "refined and lively conversation." He could not get rid of metrical conditions, and the consequence is that he is more frequently guilty of what Conington calls "the besetting sin of the Augustan poets," that is, excessive condensation, than any one of his contemporaries. Horace was conscious of it himself; *Brevis esse laboro, obscurus fio*. In endeavouring to avoid what Pattison calls the "diffuse prodigality" of an earlier school Horace fell into the opposite extreme, and omitted what was necessary to connect one train of thought with another. This was not the result of any indifference to the thought. The theory, which we have seen advanced, that Horace in his Odes was contented with writing something like nonsense verses, and let the meaning take care of itself so long as he was satisfied with the music, is contradicted by the fact that we have just the same condensation and obscurity in the Satires and Epistles, where Horace was certainly not aiming at perfection of sound or metre. We find also precisely the same fault in Pope, proceeding from the same cause. Take one instance:—

In hearts of Kings or arms of Queens who  
lay,  
How happy those to ruin, these betray.

And scores of such examples might be quoted. The most conspicuous instance of this defect in Horace is briefly referred to by Mr. Sellar, who however offers no explanation of it. It occurs in the Ode to Fortune (*O Diva, gratum quæ regis Antium, &c.*

35) Horace, addressing the goddess, says :—

Te Spes et albo rara Fides colit  
Velata panno nec comitem abnegat,  
Utcunque mutata potentes  
Veste domos inimica linquis.

Now if Loyalty clings to a falling house when Fortune has deserted it, how can Loyalty be said to follow Fortune? If she accompanies Fortune and deserts those whom the goddess deserts, how can she be called Loyalty? We all know what Horace means, of course. Hope and Loyalty continue to wait on Fortune whether she smiles or frowns; whichever side of her face she turns towards their friends, Hope and Loyalty are constant to them. But the word *linquis* implies that Fortune flies away, and *nec comitem abnegat* that Loyalty goes with her. But there is no other passage in Horace so unmanageable as this; though his meaning is often packed so closely in such a very small parcel that it takes some time to find it out.

Quintilian says that there are some passages in Horace which he would rather not try to explain. But that Horace habitually sacrificed sense to sound is a proposition which can hardly be accepted on the strength only of such passages as we have seen brought forward in support of it. As however we do not profess to understand Latin better than Horace did himself, we shall say no more about it. But of the exquisite melody and perfect finish which he imparted to his lyric metres we may perhaps speak with less presumption. Horace's chief claim to the homage of posterity rests on his position as one of the great literary artists of the world. Here he stands alone; nobody else has been able to play upon that instrument; as Munro has well said, the secret of its music was lost with its inventor.

Non bene conveniunt nec in una sede  
morantur  
Majestas et amor,

says Ovid; and these two qualities, so

rarely united, Horace has combined in perfection. The Alcaic Ode with its combination of strength and beauty is Horace, and Horace is the Alcaic Ode. The rise and fall of the metre, culminating in the third line on which the whole stanza seems as it were balanced or supported, and then falling away in the more rapid and dactylic, but less emphatic movement of the fourth, is one of the greatest triumphs of the metrical art which poetry has produced. The Sapphic is equally his own property, and occasionally equals the Alcaic in the mellowness of its tones; but its general effect is that of liveliness and vivacity, though it sometimes rises to the majestic also; it is to the Alcaic what the fife is to the flute. Horace broke them both as he was laid on the Esquiline Hill beside the bones of his patron, and no man was heir to that matchless gift, the like of which only appears at rare intervals in the history of literature.

Objection has been taken to the designation of Queen Anne's and the early Georgian epoch as the Augustan age of England. But in one respect it is apt enough. What Pope was to the poets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, that were Horace and Virgil to the poets of the Republic. If in many respects,—in the quality of his satire, in his good nature and moderation—Horace resembled Addison, in his metrical capacity and in his methods also he resembled Pope. Hear Thackeray again. "He (Pope) polished, he refined, he thought; he took thoughts from other works to adorn and complete his own; borrowing an idea or a cadence from another poet as he would a figure or a simile from a flower or a river or any object which struck him in his walk or contemplation of nature." Are we reading of the English or the Roman poet, of the reign of Augustus or the reign of Anne? Is not this Horace himself, the very man?

Another point of resemblance be-



tween the two periods is the demand which arose in both for the political support of literature. As Horace and Virgil were called upon to uphold the new government at Rome, so Addison and Steele were called upon to uphold the new government in England. We cannot indeed compare *The Campaign* or *The Freeholder* with the *Quæ cura Patrum* or *Divis orte bonis*, which last reminds us more of Shakespeare's compliment to Queen Elizabeth; but both had their origin in similar political exigencies, and in each case alike the champions of the existing order were liberally rewarded.

But besides the imperishable specimens of literary art which he has left behind him, Horace has other claims on our respect which many readers may think of equal value. A man may be a great poet without being a man of letters, as he may certainly be a man of letters without being a great poet. Horace was both. He was deeply read in all the literature then extant; and next to the woods and the hills which he loved so well, his daily delight was in his library. The picture which he draws of himself in his country home affords us a delightful glimpse of such literary leisure as is only possible in the golden days of good Haroun Alraschid. Horace goes to bed and gets up when he likes; there is no one to drag him down to the law courts the first thing in the morning, to remind him of any important engagement with his brother scribes, to solicit his interest with Mæcenæ, or to tease him about public affairs and the latest news from abroad. He can bury himself in his Greek authors, or ramble through the woody glens which lay at the foot of Mount Ustica, without a thought of business or a feeling that he ought to be otherwise employed. In the evening he returns to his own fireside, to his dinner of beans and bacon and the company of his country neighbours, who were men of education and intel-

ligence, competent to bear their part in the conversation of which he was so fond, concerning the good of life, the value of riches, and the motives of friendship. The entertainment, we may presume, was not always on so very moderate a scale. The dinner table of Ofellus (Satire ii. 2) was probably more like Horace's when he entertained a friend from town, or a country acquaintance who had dropped in for shelter from the rain. The *olus* and *perna*, corresponding perhaps to our ham and peas, or else the *faba Pythagora* and the *uncta oluscula lardo* seem to have been standing dishes at the tables of the yeoman and smaller gentry of Horace's time when they were alone and on ordinary days. But on festive occasions a joint of lamb and a roast fowl could be added to it, with a dessert of nuts, grapes, and figs, at which they sat pretty late over their wine. How modern it all seems! Pope had no difficulty in turning the *menu* of Ofellus into a dinner given by himself at Twickenham, with hardly the alteration of a word.

It is difficult to imagine any life more delightful than was led by this accomplished man for nearly thirty years; in easy circumstances, with all that fame could give, admitted to the closest intimacy with the high-born and highly cultivated society which formed the Court of Augustus, and which has been equalled only at a few choice epochs of the world's history; free to employ himself as he pleased, to enjoy all the luxuries, and all the intellectual intercourse of a great capital, or to retire, as he chose, to his beautiful rural home and his well-stocked bookshelves—*ducere sollicitæ jucunda oblivia vitæ*. It is probable that at one time he was something of a sportsman, and varied his researches into what was even then called ancient literature, with the occasional pursuit of stag, hare, or boar. He was unmarried, it is true; but if he lacked the happiness which springs from the affections he probably

did not miss it, and he escaped its concomitant anxieties. Yet with everything else to cheer him, with every elegant enjoyment at his command, with no taste ungratified and no ambition disappointed, we still see that Horace was subject to that undefinable melancholy which the sceptical philosophy grafted on to the poetical temperament can hardly fail to engender. In the *linguenda tellus*, and the *æternum exilium* he is not merely converting to poetical uses feelings which are common to mankind in all ages of the world. The same reflection recurs too often to allow of our doubting that it was habitual, and that it coloured all his views of life. The frequency of suicide among the ancients had its origin in an intensified form of this despondency. Horace doubtless did not experience it in its severest shape; he was too well fitted by nature for the enjoyment of life and society to give way to any deep or permanent depression. But it forced its way on his mind at intervals, and is a haunting presence in many of his writings when there is no open expression of it. As has been said of great wealth so we may say of such a life as Horace's, that it was calculated to make a death-bed very painful. Modern scepticism for the most part contents itself with asserting that we have no evidence to justify belief in a future state, but each man may think what he likes about the immortality of the soul. Horace was scarcely at liberty to do this. He must have looked on death as annihilation. The question may be asked whether if he had believed in a future state of rewards and punishments, he would have been any the

happier. It is a question beyond the scope of this paper. But Newman has a passage in the *Office and Work of Universities* not altogether remote from it, and so singularly applicable to the life of Horace that we cannot do better than close our own remarks with one of the most charming specimens even of Newman's style that can be found:—

Easy circumstances, books, friends, literary connections, the fine arts, presents from abroad, foreign correspondents, handsome appointments, elegant simplicity, gravel walks, lawns, flower-beds, trees and shrubberies, summer-houses, strawberry-beds, a greenhouse, a wall for peaches, *hoc erat in votis*;—nothing out of the way, no hot-houses, graperies, pineries—*Persicos odi, puer, apparatus*—no mansions, no parks, no deer, no preserves; these things are not worth the cost, they involve the bother of dependants, they interfere with enjoyment. One or two faithful servants, who last on as the trees do, and cannot change their place;—the ancients had slaves, a sort of dumb waiter, and the real article; alas! they are impossible now. We must have no one with claims upon us, or with rights; no incumbrances; no wife and children; they would hurt our dignity. We must have acquaintances within reach, yet not in the way; ready, not troublesome or intrusive. We must have something of name, or of rank, or of ancestry, or of past official life, to raise us from the dead level of mankind, to afford food for the imagination of our neighbours. . . . To a life such as this a man is more attached the longer he lives; and he would be more and more happy in it too, were it not for the *memento* within him, that books and gardens do not make a man immortal; that though they do not leave him, he at least must leave them, all but “the hateful cypresses,” and must go where the only book is the book of doom, and the only garden the Paradise of the Just.

## MRS. DRIFFIELD.

## A SKETCH.

OUR house stands in a quiet, almost suburban side street, and it has no area - entrance ; consequently when Mrs. Driffeld calls this is what happens.

First, the garden-gate gives a sad, long shriek ; it never shrieks for me or my ordinary guests, so I suppose Mrs. Driffeld bears heavily upon it, as Goethe said his countrymen did on life. Then there comes an undecided pattering about the doorstep, as if the visitor could not determine whether she were worthy to use the scraper or not. Presently this too ceases, and just as you come to the conclusion that it was a false alarm or a wandering advertisement there is a single helpless " flop " of the knocker, which means Mrs. Driffeld, and nothing else in the world. She never disappoints you, never fails to be Mrs. Driffeld, after the process of the gate-screaming, the step-pattering, the knocker-dabbing is gone through ; the whole thing takes from seven to ten minutes, according to fine or wet weather, and you are glad when you know the worst.

" Mrs. Driffeld has called and would like to see you, ma'am."

" Very well. I'll come directly ; ask her to sit down in the hall. Ellen " (this confidentially to the maid), " is it just a usual, indefinite visit, or has she something to sell ? "

" I am not sure, ma'am, but I'm afraid she *has* something under her shawl."

This is the worst kind of visit !

It is no good sitting down to finish a note or get to the end of a chapter after this. The shadow of Mrs. Driffeld lies upon me, the burden of

the mystery which she carries under her shawl.

As I look longingly at my book, her reproachful single cough resounds from the hall ; I know that I must go down and buy " it," whether it be her own crochet, or her carpenter-son's fretwork, or the shell ornaments from Venice which her sailor-son consigned to her care before drowning, or the " shot violet parasole " which her youngest daughter's mistress at Haverstock Hill gave her as good as new, " The summer the family went to Westgate-on-Sea, which is not suitable, ma'am, for my girl, and more in your line, I venture to remark, as can afford to dress handsome."

Buying old clothes being not really in my line at all, I have stood out against the " shot violet " so far, deftly turning the conversation in every other direction so soon as it crops up ; but nevertheless I feel that sleight of tongue will not avail me for ever, and sooner or later I shall be caught in the toils of this violet web.

" I just called in, ma'am, to ask how you was, not having seen you about lately and the weather so treacherous, and I ventured to bring you this to look at."

Then I know my doom is sealed.

Mrs. Driffeld is a small person, with a large face, like the face of a sad, old, white horse. She dresses in very deep mourning, save for a crimson paper rose which flames in the forehead of her crape bonnet ; she has a pair of black *suede* gloves through which her fingers, crippled with rheumatism, poke ostentatiously. She can do rough needlework and charring with these crooked hands, but their

knobs and distortions are a source of unalloyed pride to her.

"Dr. Evans, at the 'Spensary, he's said to memany a time, 'Mrs. Driffield,' he says, 'it's a wonder to me how you holds anything at all, and it's as good as a play to see you pick up a sixpence.' But I always answers him that the wind is tempered, ma'am, which it need be indeed to me, for the dear good man's cut off with this influenzy, and never another sixpence shall I ever have off him. Which brings me back to what I was saying, and what I was a-going to show you."

"Mrs. Driffield," I say severely, "you oughtn't to be reduced to this selling, which is only another form of begging. You are the mother of eleven children, and surely they ought to be able to help you; if not, you know, you ought to make up your mind to go into the House."

"Thirteen, dear, thirteen," corrects my visitor—"thirteen of my own, buried and unburied, not to speak of other people's!" And I recollect myself to accredit her with her lawful (though unattractive) baker's dozen, and to recall that in her day she has been a Gamp of some celebrity, a fact which she somehow always classes with her own claims as a mother in Israel.

"That's where it is, ma'am," she now goes off triumphantly; "if Driffield and me hadn't brought up thirteen and buried five of them respectably" [she seemed to have a notion that the grave was as good a start as any other] "on two-and-twenty shillings a week I wouldn't have said nothink; but seeing that we have, and him took off at sixty-four with nothing more than a poisoned finger, I do feel it hard that we shouldn't get no better reward than them as has spendthrifted and worse all their days."

Her reasoning is somewhat involved, but I recognise the truth of her argument. Is the House to be the end of thrifty and unthrifty alike, of the toiling parents of thirteen as well as

of the out-at-elbows vagabond whose family are "on the parish" all their lives, more or less?

"Doesn't your clergyman help you?" I say, feebly fencing against the "shot violet parasole," which I now see plainly protruding from her scanty skirts.

"Not he, dear, not he! You see I have always gone to St. Augustine's, and dressed genteel in spite of the pinch at home, and St. Augustine's is what you may call a very elegant church. To be sure, I *have* heard them pray for the fruits of the earth in due season; but I don't suppose there's one of the gentlemen there as don't sit down to his forced strawberries and his early peas every day to his luncheon or his meat-tea. Everything's done very high there, I assure you, and nothink much given away, unless it be charity ordinations and such like, which I don't care about myself."

What sort of wholesale means of grace "charity ordinations" comprise I am at a loss to determine, but from Mrs. Driffield's sniff I conclude that they are obsolete or insufficient.

"Since Elisha went, I've not been so regular at church as I might ha' been, I confes'," Mrs. Driffield goes on candidly; "but p'rhaps I've done more Bible readin' at home," and she looks at me with her long, old face slightly tilted on one side, to see if I am going to dispute this hypothesis.

"You could not do better," I remark judicially.

"It's a wonderful book, ma'am: something for everybody in it, and something for every time. There's sad chapters to take you down a bit when you feel cheerful, and merry chapters to pick you up when you feel sad. My favourite chapter of all, dear, is in St. Luke; many a laugh I've had over that christening."

"What chapter is that, Mrs. Driffield?"

"Why, the christening at Zacharias's, dear, when he took 'em all in so about the baby's name! They all

thought as he was to be called after the grandpa', an' then Zacharias he ups and says, 'His name is John,' and John it had to be, sure enough! That Zacharias must 'a been a merry man; any way, he's given me many a good laugh when I've been feeling a bit down,—after Elisha went more pertiklery."

I think of our careful, studious vicar who begs we will give our poor neighbours "sound Church principles" to work upon, and I withhold all comment from this new reading of the first chapter of St. Luke.

The "Elisha" to whom Mrs. Driffield constantly refers is a poor ne'er-do-well daughter, who, after living with her mother a few months of her widowhood, drifted into the surf of London street-life and had not re-emerged. Her real name I presently discovered to be Alicia. "A fancy name," the mother explained, "came to me, sudden-like, while I was pickin' a few winkles the night before she was born; seems almost as if it was a judgment that she should be the one to go wrong; but, after all, one out of thirteen don't seem much, do it, dear, when all's said and done? After she left me, I took an' sanctified the name, so to speak, and calls it Elisha. Yes, I expects her to come back some day; I'm sure of it, and that's why I stops on at the old place, that she may know where to come to. She always had high notions, poor girl, through bein' deceived by a butler at her first place, so I try to keep out of the House on her account; not to give her a shock, like, if she came back sudden. An' if you *could* find a use for this, ma'am" (suddenly unsheathing her weapon)—

I temporise, for the time being, with a shilling.

One evening, about six o'clock, "by the pricking of my thumb" and other signs, I know that Mrs. Driffield has arrived. Did I mention that she always chooses twilight for her visits, and prefers miserable weather, when

she enters with a gust of rain and stands in a puddle of her own dripping! To-night her hands are empty and ungloved, her flaccid face has a gleam of excitement playing on its empty surface, her head jerks restlessly to and fro. "Elisha has come back, ma'am, an' I've made up my mind to go into the House!"

"Why, Mrs. Driffield, this is news! But why should you go into the House now that your daughter is back! Won't she live with you, and help you?"

"You see, ma'am, she have brought back a young man,—a sailor, I think, leastways a fishmonger—that is willin' to marry her if she'd got but a few bits o' things to start with. An' I thought I'd better let her have my bits o' sticks and go into the House. If I could see Elisha respectably joined together in holy matrimony, it wouldn't much matter what became o' me afterwards, would it, dear? And as you was the only friend I had, I thought I'd come an' tell you, an' then you'd know why I didn't call again. I'm sure I return you many thanks for all your kindness, and every one in this house, small and great."

"Mrs. Driffield," I say impulsively, with a choking somehow in my throat, "you used to have a pretty purple parasol. If you would like to sell it, I should be very glad to give you half-a-crown for it; you may want a little money to settle your affairs or take with you."

"Thank you, dear," says Mrs. Driffield, shaking her head from side to side, "thank you, but that's gone too! I did think I should like you to have had that,—shot violet it were, with old gold underneath—but I gave it over, with everythink else, to Elisha, and she just hollered out with pleasure when she saw it, and put it up over her head in my back parlour, for all the world like a baby. I told her there was nothing so unlucky as puttin' up an umbrella indoors; but she says her luck's turned, and she don't care



a snap now that she has a home of her own. So once more thanking you, dear, I must be going."

Passing by chance next day through the street where Mrs. Driffield had struggled so long alone, I saw a hand-truck at her door, and a villainous-looking fellow,—who certainly was not a sailor, and as for a fishmonger, I doubt if he were so honest a man—loading it with her "bits o' sticks."

Elisha came bawling down the steps, hurling a feather-bed before her, which was piled on the barrow, and then the cavalcade started. As they turned the corner a drizzle of rain was beginning, and Elisha unfurled a purple parasol over the load. I could only hope they were "respectably joined together," as Mrs. Driffield quoted it, and had not got the furniture on false pretences.

## THE FOOTSTEP OF DEATH.

Godliness is great riches if a man be content with what he hath.

THESE words invariably carry me back in the spirit to a certain avenue of *shesham* trees I knew in India; an avenue six miles long, leading through barren sandy levels to the river which divided civilisation from the frontier wilds; an avenue like the aisle of a great cathedral with tall straight trunks for columns, and ribbed branches sweeping up into a vaulted roof set with starry glints of sunshine among the green fretwork of the leaves. Many a time as I walked my horse over its chequered pavement of shade and shine I have looked out sideways on the yellow glare of noon beyond in grateful remembrance of the man who,—Heaven knows when!—planted this refuge for unborn generations of travellers. Not a bad monument to leave behind one among forgetful humanity.

The avenue itself, for all its contenting shade, had nothing to do with the text which brings it to memory; that co-ordination being due to an old *fakcer* who sate at the river end, where, without even a warning break, the aisle ended in a dazzling glare of sand-bank. This sudden change no doubt accounted for the fact that on emerging from the shade I always seemed to see a faint, half-hearted mirage of the still unseen river beyond. An elusive mirage, distinct in the first surprise of its discovery, vanishing when the attention sought for it. Altogether a disturbing phenomenon, refusing to be verified; for the only man who could have spoken positively on the subject was the old *fakcer*, and he was stone-blind. His face gave evidence of the cause in the curious puffiness and want of ex-

pression which confluent small-pox often leaves behind it. In this case it had played a sorrier jest with the human face divine than usual, by placing a flat bloated mask wearing a perpetual smirk of content on the top of a mere anatomy of a body. The result was odd. For the rest a very ordinary *fakcer*, cleaner than most by reason of the reed broom at his side, which proclaimed him a member of the sweeper, or lowest, caste; in other words, one of those who at least gain from their degradation the possibility of living cleanly without the aid of others. There are many striking points about our Indian Empire; none perhaps more so, and yet less considered, than the disabilities which caste brings in its train; the impossibility, for instance, of having your floor swept unless Providence provides a man made on purpose. My *fakcer*, however, was of those to whom cleanliness and not godliness is the reason of existence.

That was why his appeal for alms, while it took a religious turn as was necessary, displayed also a truly catholic toleration. It consisted of a single monotonous cry: "In the name of your own Saint,"—or, as it might be translated, "In the name of your own God." It thrilled me oddly every time I heard it by its contented acquiescence in the fact that the scavenger's god was not a name wherewith to conjure charity. What then? The passer-by could give in the name of his particular deity and let the minor prophets go.

The plan seemed successful, for the wooden bowl, placed within the clean-swept ring, bordered by its edging of dust or mud, wherein he sate winter and summer, was never empty, and his

cry, if monotonous, was cheerful. Not ten yards from his station beneath the last tree, the road ended in a deep cutting, through which a low-level bed of water flowed to irrigate a basin of alluvial land to the south; but a track, made passable for carts by tiger-grass laid athwart the yielding sand, skirted the cut to reach a ford higher up. A stiff bit for the straining bullocks, so all save the drivers took the short cut by the plank serving as a footbridge. It served also as a warning to the blind *fakcer*, without which many a possible contributor to the bowl might have passed unheard and unsolicited over the soft sand. As it was, the first creak of the plank provoked his cry.

It was not, however, till I had passed the old man many times in my frequent journeyings across the river that I noticed two peculiarities in his method. He never begged of me or any other European who chanced that way, nor of those coming from the city to the river. The latter might be partly set down to the fact that from his position he could not hear their footsteps on the bridge till after they had passed; but the former seemed unaccountable; and one day when the red-funnelled steam ferry-boat, which set its surroundings so utterly at defiance, was late, I questioned him on the subject.

"You lose custom, surely, by seeking the shade?" I began. "If you were at the other side of the cut you would catch those who come from the city. They are the richest."

As he turned his closed eyes towards me with a grave obeisance which did not match the jaunty content of his mask, he looked,—sitting in the centre of his swept circle—ludicrously like one of those penwipers young ladies make for charity bazaars.

"The Presence mistakes," he replied. "Those who come from the town have empty wallets. 'Tis those who come from the wilderness who give."

"But you never beg of me, whether I go or come. Why is that?"

"I take no money, *Huzoor*; it is of no use to me. The Sahibs carry no food with them; not even tobacco, only cheroots."

The evident regret in the latter half of his sentence amused me. "'Tis you who mistake, *fakcer-ji*," I replied, taking out my pouch. "I am of those who smoke pipes. And now tell me why you refuse money; most of your kind are not so self-denying."

"That is easy to explain. Some cannot eat what is given; with me it is the other way. As my lord knows, we dust-like ones eat most things your God has made. But we cannot eat money, perhaps because He did not make it,—so the *padres* say."

"Ah! you are learned; but you can always buy."

"Begging is easier. See! my bowl is full, and the munificent offering of the Presence is enough for two pipes. What more do I want?"

Viewed from his standpoint the question was a hard one to answer. The sun warmed him, the leaves sheltered him, the passers-by nourished him, all apparently to his utmost satisfaction. I felt instinctively that the state of his mind was the only refuge for the upholders of civilisation, and a high standard of comfort. So I asked him what he thought about all day long. His reply brought total eclipse to all my lights.

"*Huzoor*!" he said gravely, "I meditate on the Beauty of Holiness."

It was then that the text already quoted became indissolubly mixed up with the spreading *shesham* branches, the glare beyond, and that life-sized penwiper in the foreground. I whistled the refrain of a music-hall song and pretended to light my pipe. "How long have you been here?" I asked, after a time, during which he sat still as a graven image with his closed eyes towards the uncertain mirage of the river.

"'Tis nigh on thirty years, my lord, since I have been waiting."

"Waiting for what?"

"For the Footstep of Death,—hark!"

he paused suddenly, and a tremor came to his closed eyelids as he gave the cry: "In the name of your God!"

The next instant a faint creak told me that the first passenger from the newly arrived ferry-boat had set foot on the bridge. "You have quick ears, *fakeer-ji*," I remarked.

"I live on footsteps, my lord."

"And when the Footstep of Death comes you will die of one, I presume!"

He turned his face towards me quickly; it gave me quite a shock to find a pair of clear, light-brown eyes looking at, or rather beyond, me. From his constantly closed lids I had imagined that,—as is so often the case in small-pox—the organs of sight were hopelessly diseased or altogether destroyed; indeed, I had been grateful for the concealment of a defect out of which many beggars would have made capital. But these eyes were apparently as perfect as my own, and extraordinarily clear and bright; so clear that it seemed to me as if they did not even hold a shadow of the world around them. The surprise made me forget my first question in another.

"*Huzoor!*" he replied, "I am quite blind. The Light came from the sky one day and removed the Light I had before. It was a bad thunderstorm, *Huzoor*; at least, being the last this slave saw, he deems it bad. But it is time the Great Judge took his exalted presence to yonder snorting demon of a boat, for it is ill-mannered, waiting for none. God knows wherefore it should hurry so. The river remains always, and sooner or later the screeching thing sticks on a sandbank."

"True enough," I replied, laughing. "Well! *salaam, fakeer-ji*."

"*Salaam*, Shelter of the World. May the God of gods elevate your honour to the post of Lieutenant-Governor without delay."

After this I often stopped to say a few words to the old man and give him a pipeful of tobacco. For the ferry-boat fulfilled his prophecy of its future to a nicety, by acquiring inti-

mate acquaintance with every shallow in the river; a habit fatal to punctuality. It was an odd sight lying out, so trim and smart, in the wastes of sand and water. Red funnels standing up from among Beloochees and their camels, bullocks scarred by the plough, *zenana*-women huddled in helpless white heaps, wild frontiersmen squatted on the saddle-bags with which a sham orientalism has filled our London drawing-rooms. Here and there a dejected half-caste or a specimen of young India brimful of *The Spectator*. Over all, on the bridge, Captain Ram Baksh struggling with a double nature, represented on the one side by his nautical pea-coat, on the other by his baggy native trousers. "Ease her! stop her! hard astern! full speed ahead!" All the shibboleths, even to the monotonous "*ba-la-mar-do* (by the mark two)" of the leadsman forrards. Then, suddenly, overboard goes science and with it a score of lascars and passengers, who, knee-deep in the ruddy stream, set their backs lazily against the side, and the steam ferry-boat *Pioneer*, built at Barrow-in-Furness with all the latest improvements, sidles off her sandbank in the good old legitimate way sanctioned by centuries of river usage. To return, however, to *fakeer-ji*. I found him as full of trite piety as a copy-book, and yet for all that the fragments of his history, with which he interlarded these commonplaces, seemed to me well worth consideration. Imagine a man born of a long line of those who have swept the way for princes; who have, as it were, prepared God's earth for over-refined footsteps. That, briefly, had been *fakeer-ji's* inheritance before he began to wait for the Footstep of Death. Whatever it may do to the imagination of others, the position appealed to mine strongly, the more so because, while speaking freely enough about the family of decayed kings to whom he and his forbears had belonged, and of the ruined palace they still possessed in the oldest part of the city, he was

singularly reticent as to the cause which had turned him into a religious beggar. For the rest he waited in godliness and contentment (or so he assured me) for the Footstep of Death.

The phrase grew to be quite a catch-word between us. "Not come yet, *fakcer-ji*?" I would call as I trotted past after a few days' absence.

"*Huzoor*! I am still waiting. It will come some time."

One night in the rains word came from a contractor over the water that a new canal-dam of mine showed signs of giving, and, anxious to be on the spot, I set off at once to catch the midnight ferry-boat. I shall not soon forget that ride through the *shesham* aisle. The floods were out, and for the best part of the way a level sheet of water gleaming in the moonlight lay close up to the embankment of the avenue, which seemed more than ever like a dim colonnade leading to an unseen Holy of Holies. Not a breath of wind, not a sound save the rustle of birds in the branches overhead, and suddenly, causelessly, a snatch of song hushed in its first notes, as if the singer found it too light for sleep, too dark for song. The beat of my horse's feet seemed to keep time with the stars twinkling through the leaves.

I was met at the road's end by the unwelcome news that at least two hours must elapse ere the *Pioneer* could be got off a newly-invented mud-bank which the river had maliciously placed in a totally unexpected place. Still more unwelcome was the discovery that, in my hurry, I had left my tobacco-pouch behind me. Nothing could be done save to send my groom back with the pony and instructions for immediate return with the forgotten luxury. After which I strolled over towards my friend the *fakcer*, who sate ghostlike in the moonlight with his bowl full to the brim in front of him. "That snorting devil behaves worse every day," he said fervently; "but if the Shelter of the Poor will tarry a twinkling I will sweep him

a spot suitable for his exalted presence."

Blind as he was, his dexterous broom had traced another circle of cleanliness in a trice, a new reed-mat, no bigger than a handkerchief, was placed in the centre, and I was being invited to ornament just such another penwiper as the *fakcer* occupied himself. "Mercy," he continued, as I took my seat, shifting the mat so as to be able to lean my back against the tree, "blesses both him who gives, and those who take." Even Shakespeare, it will be observed, yields at times to platitude. "For see," he added solemnly, producing something from a hollow in the root, "the Presence's own tobacco returns to the Presence's pipe."

Sure enough it was genuine Golden Cloud, and the relief overpowered me. There I was after a space, half-lying, half-sitting in the clean warm sand, my hands clasped at the back of my head as I looked up into the shimmering light and shade of the leaves.

"Upon my soul I envy you, *fakcer-ji*. We who go to bed at set times and seasons don't know the world we live in."

"Religion is its own reward," remarked the graven image beside me, for he had gone back to his penwiper by this time. But I was talking more to myself than to him, in the half-drowsy excitement of physical pleasure, so I went on unheeding.

"Was there ever such a night since the one Jessica looked upon! and what a scent there is in the air,—orange blossoms or something!"

"It is a tree further up the water-cut, *Huzoor*, a hill tree. The river may have brought the seed; it happens so sometimes. Or the birds may have brought it from the city. There was a tree of the kind in a garden there. A big tree with large white flowers; so large that you can hear them fall."

The graven image sat so still with its face to the river, that it seemed to me as if the voice I heard could not



belong to it. A dreamy sense of unreality added to my drowsy enjoyment of the surroundings.

"Magnolia," I murmured sleepily; "a flower to dream about,—hullo! what's that?"

A faint footfall as of some one passing down an echoing passage, loud, louder, loudest, making me start up, wide awake, as the *fakcer's* cry rose on the still air: "In the name of your God!"

Some one was passing the bridge from the river, and after adding his mite to the bowl, went on his way.

"It is the echo, *Huzoor*," explained the old man, answering my start of surprise: "The tree behind us is hollow and the cut is deep. Besides, to night the water runs deep and dark as Death because of the flood. The step is always louder then."

"No wonder you hear so quickly," I replied, sinking back again to my comfort. "I thought it must be the Footstep of Death at least."

He had turned towards me, and in the moonlight I could see those clear eyes of his shining as if the light had come into them again.

"Not yet, *Huzoor*! But it may be the next one for all we know."

What a gruesome idea! Hark! There it was again; loud, louder, loudest, and then silence.

"That came from the city, *Huzoor*. It comes and goes often, for the law-courts have it in grip. Perhaps that is worse than Death."

"Then you recognise footsteps?"

"Surely. No two men walk the same; a footstep is as a face. Sometimes after long years it comes back, and then you know it has passed before."

"Do they generally come back?"

"Those from the city go back sooner or later unless Death takes them. Those from the wilderness do not always return. The city holds them fast, in the palace or in the gutter."

Again the voice seemed to me not to belong to the still figure beside me.

"It makes a devilish noise I admit," I said, half to myself; "but——"

"Perhaps if the *Huzoor* listened for Death as I do he might keep awake. Or perhaps if my lord pleases I might tell him a story of footsteps to drive the idle dreams from his brain till the hour of that snorting demon comes in due time?"

"Go ahead," said I briefly as I looked up at the stars.

So he began. "It's a small story, *Huzoor*. A tale of footsteps from beginning to end, for I am blind. Yet life was not always listening. They used to say that Cheytu had the longest sight, the longest legs, and the longest wind of any boy of his age. I was Cheytu." He paused, and I watched a dancing shadow of a leaf till he went on. "The little Princess said Cheytu had the longest tongue too, for I used to sit in the far corner by the pillar beyond her carpet and tell her stories. She used to call for Cheytu all day long. 'Cheytu, smooth the ground for Aimna's feet'—'Cheytu, sweep the dead flowers from Aimna's path'—'Cheytu, fan the flies from Aimna's doll,'—for naturally, *Huzoor*, Cheytu the sweeper did not fan the flies from the little Princess herself; that was not his work. I belonged to her footsteps. I was up before dawn sweeping the arcades of the old house ready for them, and late at night it was my work to gather the dust of them and the dead flowers she had played with, and bury them away in the garden out of sight."

A dim perception that this was strange talk for a sweeper made me murmur sleepily, "That was very romantic of you, Cheytu." On the other hand it fitted my environment so admirably that the surprise passed almost as it came.

"She was a real Princess, the daughter of Kings who had been,—God knows when! It is written doubtless somewhere. Yes! a real Princess, though she could barely walk, and the track of her little feet was often broken by hand-marks in

the dust. For naturally, *Huzoor*, the dust might help her, but not I, Cheytu, who swept it for her steps. That was my task till the day of the thunderstorm. The house seemed dead of the heat. Not a breath of life anywhere, so at sundown they set her to sleep on the topmost roof under the open sky. Her nurse, full of frailty as women are, crept down while the child slept, to work evil to mankind as women will. *Huzoor*, it was a bad storm. The red clouds had hung over us all day long, joining the red dust from below, so that it came unawares at last, splitting the air and sending a great ladder of light down the roof.

“‘Aimna! Aimna!’ cried some one. I was up first and had her in my arms; for see you, *Huzoor*, it was life or death, and the dead belong to us whether they be kings or slaves. It was out on the bare steps, and she sleeping sound as children sleep, that the light came. The light of a thousand days in my eyes and on her face. It was the last thing I saw, *Huzoor*; the very last thing Cheytu the sweeper ever saw.

“But I could hear. I could hear her calling and I knew how her face must be changing by the change in her voice. And then one day I found myself sweeping the house against her wedding-feast; heard her crying amongst her girl friends in the inner room. What then? Girls always cry at their weddings. I went with her, of course, to the new life because I had swept the way for her ever since she could walk, and she needed me more than ever in a strange house. It was a fine rich house, with marble floors and a marble summerhouse on the roof above her rooms. People said she had made a good bargain with her beauty; perhaps, but that child's face that I saw in the light was worth more than money, *Huzoor*. She had ceased crying by this time, for she had plenty to amuse her. Singers and players, and better story-tellers than Cheytu the sweeper. It was but fair,

for look you, her man had many more wives to amuse him. I used to hear the rustle of her long silk garments, the tinkle of her ornaments, and the cadence of her laughter. Girls ought to laugh, *Huzoor*, and it was spring time; what we natives call spring, when the rain turns dry sand to grass and the roses race the jasmine for the first blossom. The tree your honour called magnolia grew in the women's court, and some of the branches spread over the marble summerhouse almost hiding it from below. Others again formed a screen against the blank white wall of the next house. The flowers smelt so strong that I wondered how she could bear to sleep amongst them in the summerhouse. Even in my place below on the stones of the courtyard they kept me awake. People said I had fever, but it was not that; only the scent of the flowers. I lay awake one dark, starless night, and then I first heard the footstep, if it was a footstep. Loud, louder, loudest; then a silence save for the patter of the falling flowers. I heard it often after that, and always when it had passed the flowers fell. They fell about the summerhouse too, and in the morning I used to sweep them into a heap and fling them over the parapet. But one day, *Huzoor*, they fell close at hand, and my groping fingers seeking the cause found a plank placed bridge-wise amongst the branches. *Huzoor!* was there any wonder the flowers fell all crushed and broken? That night I listened again, and again the footsteps came amid a shower of blossoms. What was to be done? Her women were as women are, and the others were jealous already. Next day when I went to sweep I strewed the fallen flowers thick, thick as a carpet round her bed; for she had quick wits I knew.

“‘Cheytu! Cheytu!’

“The old call came as I knew it would, and thinking of that little child's face in the light I went up to her boldly.

" 'My Princess,' I said in reply to her question as I bent over the flowers, ' 'tis the footstep makes them fall so thick. If it is your pleasure I will bid it cease. They may hurt your feet.' "

" I knew from her silence she understood. Suddenly she laughed ; such a girl's laugh. "

" 'Flowers are soft to tread upon, Cheytu. Go ! you need sweep for me no more.' "

" I laughed too as I went. Not sweep for her when she only knew God's earth after I had made it ready for her feet ! It was a woman's idle word, but woman-like she would think and see wisdom for herself. "

" That night I listened once more. The footstep must come once I knew ; just once, and after that wisdom and safety. *Huzoor* ! it came, and the flowers fell softly. But wisdom was too late. I tried to get at her to save her from their pitiless justice. I heard her cries for mercy ; I heard her cry even for Cheytu the sweeper before they flung me from the steps where the twinkling lights went up and down as if the very stars from the sky had come to spy on her. What did they do to her while I lay crushed among the crushed flowers ? Who knows ? It is often done, my lord, behind the walls. She died ; that is all I know, that is all I cared for. When I came back to life she was dead and the footstep had fled from revenge. It had friends over the Border where it could pause in safety till the tale was forgotten. Such things are forgotten quickly, my lord, because the revenge must be secret as the wrong ; else it is shame, and shame must not come nigh good families. But the blind do not forget easily ; perhaps they have less to remember. Could I forget the child's face in the light ? As I told the Presence, those who go from the city come back to it sooner or later unless Death takes them first. So I wait for the Footstep—hark ! "

Loud—louder—loudest : " In the name of your own God. "

\* \* \* \*

Did I wake with the cry ? Or did I only open my eyes to see a glimmer of dawn paling the sky, the birds shifting in the branches, the old man seated bolt upright in his penwiper. "

" That was the first passenger, *Huzoor*, " he said quietly. " The boat has come. It is time your honour conferred dignity on ill manners by joining it. "

" But the Footstep ! the Princess ! you were telling me just now—— " "

" What does a sweeper know of princesses, my lord ? The Presence slept, and doubtless he dreamed dreams. The tobacco—— " "

He paused. " Well, " said I curiously. "*Huzoor* ! this slave steeps his tobacco in the sleep-compeller. It gives great contentment. "

I looked down at my pipe. It was but half smoked through. Was this really the explanation ?

" But the echo ? " I protested. " I heard it but now. "

" Of a truth there is an echo. That is not a dream. For the rest it is well. The time has passed swiftly, the *Huzoor* is rested, his servant has returned, the boat has come—all in contentment. The Shelter of the World can proceed on his journey in peace, and return in peace. "

" Unless the Footstep of Death overtakes me meanwhile, " said I but half satisfied. "

" *Huzoor* ! It never overtakes the just. Death and the righteous look at each other in the face as friends. When the Footstep comes I will go to meet it, and so will you. Hark ! the demon screeches. Peace go with you, my lord. "

About a year after this the daily police reports brought me the news that my friend the old *fakcer* had been found dead in the water-cut. An unusually heavy flood had undermined the banks and loosened the bridge ; it must have fallen while the old man was on it, for his body was jammed against the plank which had stuck across the channel a little way down the stream. He had kept

his word and gone to meet the Footstep. A certain unsatisfied curiosity, which had never quite left me since that night in the rains, made me accompany the doctor when, as in duty bound, he went to the dead-house to examine the body. The smiling mask was unchanged, but the eyes were open, and looked somehow less empty dead than in the almost terrible clearness of life. The right hand was fast clenched over something.

"Only a crushed magnolia blossom," said the doctor, gently unclasping the dead fingers. "Poor beggar! it must have been floating in the water,—there's a tree up the cut; I've often smelt it from the road. Drowning men,—you know the rest."

Did I? The coincidence was, to

say the least of it, curious. It became more curious still when, three weeks afterwards, the unrecognisable body of a man was found half buried in the silt left in the alluvial basin by the subsiding floods; a man of more than middle age, whose right hand was clenched tight, over nothing.

So the question remains. Did I dream that night, or did the Footstep of Death bring revenge when it came over the bridge at last? I have never been able to decide; and the only thing which remains sure is the figure of the old *fakcer* with blind eyes, looking out on the uncertain mirage of the river waiting in godliness and contentment,—for what?

HAMPTON COURT.<sup>1</sup>

FEW of our historic buildings recall the names of their founders as inevitably as Hampton Court suggests the name of Thomas Wolsey. We may think of Windsor Castle or the Tower of London without thinking of William the Conqueror or Julius Cæsar; we may occasionally forget that Westminster Hall was first raised by Rufus, or that St. James's was originally built by Henry VIII.; but no one whose thoughts are turned for a few moments to Hampton Court ever fails to remember that it was created by the son of the Ipswich tradesman. There is no more striking figure in English history than the great Cardinal who ruled the kingdom for nearly twenty years, and whose aims, even when they cannot be called lofty, were always extended and magnificent. Mr. Law, who has recently completed his valuable *History of Hampton Court*, does full justice to Wolsey's character and conceptions. When he was established in power, the Emperor Charles and Francis I. contended for his friendship, and his official emoluments from Church and State were swelled by pensions from both these sovereigns. The income he enjoyed as Lord Chancellor and Primate of the Northern Province was very large. Besides this, the revenues of three sees whose holders were foreigners fell into his hands; he secured also the wealthy bishopric of Winchester, and the great Abbacy of St. Albans. Endowed with such resources as these, this aspiring genius was able to lavish on his undertakings sums that

would have exhausted the treasury of many princes.

In January, 1515, the Knights Hospitallers of St. John granted a lease of their manor of Hampton Court for ninety-nine years to Thomas Wolsey, Archbishop of York, at a yearly rental of £50. The most reverend lessee was created Cardinal in September of the same year, and he resolved that the habitation which he had already begun to erect on his new possession should be worthy of his new dignities and ever-growing greatness. Mr. Law's careful and interesting volumes contain a full account of the rise, progress, and vicissitudes of the noble palace thus designed, and the narrative is embellished with abundant illustrations, which add greatly to the attractions of the work.

Wolsey's edifice consisted of five great courts, surrounded by public and private rooms, and provided with all the accessories of regal state and enjoyment. The great west front of the building, when first finished, presented an aspect very different from its present appearance. "The central gateway, now dwarfed to three storeys, was then a grand and imposing Tudor gate-house, or square tower, five storeys in height, with four corner octagonal turrets, which were capped by leaden cupolas adorned with crockets, pinnacles, and gilded vanes." The first court, which is still the largest quadrangle in the palace, led into a second, called the Clock Court, where the Cardinal had his private apartments. Here were placed medallion busts of Roman Emperors, which are sometimes erroneously stated to have been presents from Leo X. On the inner side of the gateway under the Clock Tower were displayed the Car-

<sup>1</sup> *The History of Hampton Court Palace*; by Ernest Law. In three volumes, illustrated with one hundred and thirty autotypes, etchings, engravings, maps and plans. London, 1885—91.



dinal's arms, which curiously enough were left undisturbed by Henry VIII. when he afterwards substituted his own arms and cognisances everywhere else. Wolsey's closet was draped with cloth of gold, the ceiling was fretted with gold; all his reception-rooms were equally resplendent, and the windows blazed with painted glass. Portions of the structure within these two courts belong also to Wolsey's edifice, but the inmost courts he probably did not live to finish, and most of the present buildings were erected at later dates. The Cardinal's hall, as we shall see, was pulled down by Henry VIII. on his taking possession, and the chapel was certainly remodelled, if not entirely rebuilt, by the same monarch. All things, however, considered, Mr. Law thinks that the original palace cannot have been much smaller than the existing one, which covers eight acres and has a thousand rooms.

All Wolsey's buildings were carefully drained by means of great brick sewers discharging into the Thames. The system adopted was so complete that it was never found needful to supersede or alter it till the year 1871, when modern rules of sanitation required the outfall into the river to be stopped. For the supply of his household Wolsey brought water of great purity from springs in Coombe Hill, a spot three miles distant, through leaden pipes laid under the bed of the Thames. On the embellishment and furnishing of his new habitation the Cardinal bestowed equal care and attention. Nothing was too great or too small for the grasp of his intellect. We may almost say, with the late Professor Brewer, that this great man could build a kitchen, or plan a college, or raise a tower as no man since has been able to do any of these things. And his taste was as comprehensive as his genius. If Quentin Matsys had a picture on the easel, Wolsey was ready to purchase it. If there was a curious clock, it was secured for him. His fondness for

tapestry amounted to a passion. Trusty agents ransacked the Continent to procure choice sets of arras, new and old, for the rising palace. If the owner generally preferred Scriptural subjects, as became a prince of the Church, he also collected many hangings wrought with scenes from classic or medieval story. Thus, while the walls of one chamber set forth the history of Samuel or David or Esther, those of another glowed with the labours of Hercules, the woes of Priam, or the Romaunte of the Rose; in the rooms where he received visitors, the tapestries were changed once a week. No less than two hundred and eighty beds were provided for strangers, with superb canopies and curtains of silk or velvet. There were bedsteads of alabaster, quilts of down, and pillow-cases embroidered with silk and gold. The chairs of state were covered with cloth of gold; the tables and cabinets were of the most costly woods. Much of the splendid furniture was emblazoned with "My lord's arms"; everywhere was impressed the Cardinal's hat. The same magnificence appeared in the decorations and ornaments of the chapel. But the forty-four gorgeous copes of one suit, and the rest of the sacerdotal pomp displayed there were eclipsed by the majesty of Wolsey's secular equipment. The annual expenses of his household exceeded £30,000, an immense sum for those days. His retinue of five hundred persons, his kingly stud, his sumptuous open table are mentioned in every history. When he rode to and from Westminster in his character of Lord Chancellor, his mule was attended by a long train of nobles and knights on horseback; his pursuivant, ushers, and other officers led the way in rich liveries, while footmen with gilded pole-axes brought up the rear.

At Hampton Court the haughty Minister received the ambassadors of foreign Powers, and entertained them with regal luxury. From it, at the height of his power, he directed every department of the realm. While Eras-

mus declared that he was omnipotent, and the Venetian Giustinian that he was seven times greater than the Pope himself, Wolsey's enemy Skelton, in his satire *Why come ye not to Court?* asserts that "Hampton Court hath the pre-eminence." Undoubtedly the palace which was the most signal monument of the statesman's eminence assisted to hasten his decline. The jealousy of a monarch like Henry could only be kept down by the subject's watchful submission. At the very moment of his final disgrace, it was said that the King had no ill-will to the Cardinal, but a great desire for his remaining possessions. Mr. Law shows that so early as midsummer 1525 at least, Wolsey had made over to the Crown his interest in the manor of Hampton with the stately pile which he had raised and its priceless contents, though down to the time of his downfall he continued to make use of all as though still his own property. His biographer Cavendish describes a great feast which he made there, in October 1527, for a French embassy headed by the Grand Master Montmorency, whose retinue freely expressed their astonishment at the wonderful value of the hangings and plate. The banqueting-rooms were illuminated by innumerable candelabra of silver gilt. Supper was served to the sound of trumpets, and accompanied by a concert of music. But the host was not yet come, having been detained in the Court of Chancery by the hearing of a long cause. Before the second course he entered suddenly, booted and spurred, and sitting down in his riding-dress, made a brilliant display of the convivial talents which had first recommended him to the royal favour. This, however, was the last grand entertainment given by Wolsey at Hampton Court, and we find that from the beginning of 1528 the expense of the works then in progress was borne by the King. Yet the Cardinal remained in possession till July 1529, when he took a last leave of his beloved brick towers and courts. A few weeks later he was

deprived of the Great Seal, stripped of his goods, and ordered to quit York House for Esher Place, while his master installed himself at Hampton Court, accompanied by Anne Boleyn, who made herself daily more necessary to her royal admirer.

Henry took great delight in his new residence, and laid out large sums in enlarging and still further embellishing the fabric. He pulled down Wolsey's hall as insufficient for a royal mansion, erecting in its place the present Great Hall with its richly carved roof. His additions were not completed till the end of 1538, from which date the palace remained pretty well unaltered till the time of William III. In 1531 the Hospitallers granted to His Majesty the fee-simple of the manor in exchange for other mesuages. Anne Boleyn passed her honeymoon here, and presided as Queen at a succession of banquets, masques, interludes, and sports. But Henry was already flirting with her maids of honour, and it was here that some time afterwards the new Queen surprised Jane Seymour sitting on his knee. The Queen's New Lodgings, which were begun for the unfortunate Anne, were completed for her successor. Scarcely had the workmen finished obliterating the badges and initials of Anne Boleyn and substituting those of Jane Seymour, than the palace witnessed the birth of Edward VI., and twelve days later the death of his mother. In the summer of 1540 Anne of Cleves was here awaiting her sentence of divorce. That pronounced, she removed to Richmond, and Catherine Howard was openly shown as Queen at Hampton Court. Here in July 1543 Catherine Parr was married and proclaimed Queen. While his vigour lasted Henry occupied his leisure with field-sports in the parks, which then, as now, consisted of two main divisions.—Bushey Park and the Home Park—separated from each other by the Kingston Road. When he became too corpulent to bear the exertion of frequent journeys to Windsor Forest, he pro-

cured an Act of Parliament ordaining that the manor of Hampton and an extensive tract of adjacent country should be enclosed in a wooden paling and created a deer forest or chase, under the name of Hampton Court Chase, all the game therein being preserved for the King's diversion. This high-handed measure, worthy of William the Conqueror, provoked loud complaints from the inhabitants of the various parishes appropriated, and in the next reign the deer and paling outside the parks were removed by order of the Privy Council, though the district is still nominally a Royal Chase under the authority of a Keeper appointed by the Crown.

As the King's life drew towards its close, his visits to the river-side palace became more prolonged. A picture, attributed to Holbein or one of his school, which still hangs in the Queen's Audience Chamber, shows Bluff Harry at this period seated in the midst of his family, his right hand resting on the shoulder of Prince Edward who stands by his father, while Catherine Parr sits on his left, and the two princesses, Mary and Elizabeth, are stationed on either side. When no longer capable of hunting, the King amused himself indoors with backgammon, shovelboard, and similar pastimes, at which, in wet weather and on long evenings, he staked and lost large sums. Here in 1543 and the following year he kept Christmas with great state, and it was perhaps on the latter occasion that the poetic Earl of Surrey, who was present, became enamoured of his fair Geraldine, of whom he says, "Hampton me taught to wish her first for mine."

More sombre associations are connected with the place in the two following reigns. Edward VI. was here with his uncle Somerset in the autumn of 1549, when the Protector received intelligence of the league formed against him by his enemies on the Council. It was from Hampton Court that the desperate statesman issued his proclamation calling on all loyal subjects

to come armed to the help of their sovereign; and when the confederates seized the Tower of London, he produced the Boy King, imploring the country folk to "be good to us and our uncle." But that same night Edward had to be hurried to Windsor, and a few days later the Protector was a prisoner. It was at Hampton Court that Edward in 1551 raised his uncle's triumphant rival to the dukedom of Northumberland, and the father of Jane Grey to the dukedom of Suffolk. Here Queen Mary and her Spanish Consort lived in great retirement after their marriage, winning little popularity: "The hall door within the Court was continually shut, so that no man might enter unless his errand were first known; which seemed strange to Englishmen that had not been used thereto." No less disgust was felt at the niggardly table kept by the happy pair. Instead of celebrating their union, as Henry had celebrated his numerous weddings, with liberal hospitality, they dined in private on dishes which the English reserved for fast-days. It was to Hampton Court that Mary withdrew for quiet in April 1555, when she was daily expecting to become a mother, and the despatches announcing her safe delivery were prepared and signed by the King and Queen "At our house of Hampton Court," though the time never came to fill in the blanks which had been left for the date, and the termination by which the unfinished word *fil* was to be made to serve for a boy or a girl as occasion should require. It was while the birth was still impatiently expected, and not in the previous winter as some authorities have stated, that Elizabeth was summoned from Woodstock to Hampton Court, and pressed to renounce the faith in which she had been educated. Here occurred the famous interview between the sisters when Philip was concealed behind the arras ready, as some have supposed, to protect Elizabeth against any unseemly violence from the Queen, but probably playing the more simple

part of an eavesdropper. Whatever were the feelings of the King and Queen, with this interview ended Elizabeth's imprisonment. Thenceforth she was treated as heiress to the throne, while Philip, after chafing four months at Hampton Court with his barren wife, took ship in August for the Netherlands.

Much of the scandal about Queen Elizabeth had its origin at Hampton Court, but during her long reign the palace was the scene of few important events. The Virgin Queen spent much time there with the husband of Amy Robsart while she was trifling with the early matrimonial schemes proposed to her by her Council or allies; but as time ran on, when she was not at Westminster, she preferred Windsor, Greenwich, or Richmond for her residence, and made only flying visits to the place where her mother had won and lost her crown. In 1562 Elizabeth was seized with small-pox at Hampton Court, and for some hours the greatest alarm prevailed among the friends of the Reformation. When six autumns later the Queen of Scots was a prisoner at Bolton Castle, and Elizabeth summoned to Hampton Court a great council of peers to hear the contents of the famous Casket read, and to decide on the charges against Mary respecting the murder of Darnley, it was the turn of the Romanists to feel despondent. After this down to the end of the century the annals of the place record nothing more interesting than Christmas festivities, with the usual round of balls, masquerades, and plays. A temporary theatre was fitted up in the Great Hall, but no permanent improvements or changes of much moment were made either in the buildings or parks. The interior of the palace is described by Paul Hentzner, who was in England shortly before the Queen's death. The German traveller speaks of two Presence Chambers and numerous other rooms shining with tapestry of gold, silver, and silk or velvet; of several royal beds, including, besides the

Queen's own bed of state, another, the tester of which had been worked by Anne Boleyn for Henry VIII., and a third in which Edward VI. was said to have been born and his mother to have died; of the Great Hall adorned with noble portraits and many rare curiosities. Everywhere gleamed rich hangings and cushions and quilts embroidered with the precious metals. The visitor saw also a cabinet called Paradise, "Where, besides that everything glitters so with silver, gold, and jewels as to dazzle one's eyes, there is a musical instrument made all of glass except the strings."

The next age, bringing its long train of political and religious controversies, was fitly ushered in by the Hampton Court Conference, which, having been called to reconcile two diverging ecclesiastical parties, ended by setting them hopelessly at variance. We need but allude in passing to this ill-judged attempt at enforcing union by royal dictation. "The Bishops," wrote Harrington, who was present, "said His Majesty spoke by the power of inspiration. I wist not what they meant; but the spirit was rather foul-mouthed." One good result however came from the Conference; a suggestion of the Puritan spokesman led to the preparation of the Authorised Version of the Bible. The change from the Tudors to the Stuarts became at once apparent in small things as well as great. Maladroit in every way, James incurred much odium and some ridicule by the selfishness with which, in season and out of season, he pursued the royal pastime of stag-hunting at Hampton Court, and by his rage against spectators of his sport. The King, though he rode constantly to hounds, was so little of a real sportsman that he would take shots from behind a tree at the tame deer as they browsed in the shade. Anne of Denmark was celebrated by Ben Jonson as the "Huntress Queen," and a curious painting of her in that character is still to be seen at Hampton Court; but so far was she from being a Diana



that on one occasion she mistook her mark, and shot her husband's favourite hound. Her health broke down in the autumn of 1618, and though on Christmas Day she was able to attend "a whole sermon in the chamber next Paradise," she took to her bed not long afterwards, and died in the palace at the beginning of March.

Charles I. in the earlier part of his reign was often at Hampton Court, sometimes for pleasure, sometimes when the plague raged in London, but little happened to mark these visits. He enriched the palace with many works of art; when Henrietta Maria quarrelled with him there about her household, the French suite were expelled from England, bag and baggage; when the plague was worse than usual, orders were issued to forbid Londoners coming within ten miles of the place; Shakespeare's plays were performed in the Great Hall before the Court by actors who were the poet's contemporaries. Beyond such facts as these, there is nothing to notice until the eve of the Civil War. The Grand Remonstrance was presented to Charles at Hampton Court. Hither he fled from the tumults in the capital after the failure of his attempt to arrest the Five Members. So little had his coming been expected that the King and Queen, on their arrival, had to sleep in one room with their three eldest children. One more night Charles spent here a few weeks later, when conducting Henrietta from Windsor to Dover on her departure from England. At his next visit in August, 1647, he came as a prisoner, and remained three months under a very mild restraint, being suffered to keep his old servants about him, to receive visits from many Royalists, and to enjoy the society of his children, who were then at Sion House under the care of the Earl of Northumberland. He played a game in the tennis-court on the very day of his escape.

During the Commonwealth the manor of Hampton Court was sold by the Parliament; but the sale was after-

wards cancelled on the ground that the house was convenient for the retirement of persons employed in public affairs, and a year or two later it had passed into the possession of Oliver Cromwell, who thenceforth made the place one of his principal residences. In like manner the goods, furniture, and works of art were appraised and offered for sale. The splendid tapestries were valued at prices which even in the present day would be thought exorbitant; while the finest pictures of the collection were estimated at comparatively small sums. The famous Cartoons of Raphael, which had been purchased by Charles on the recommendation of Rubens, were set down at no more than £300. These, however, with some others of the finest paintings, were withdrawn from the catalogue by order of the Council of State; and at the end of a sale lasting nearly three years, several of the best tapestries were found to have been appropriated by the Lord Protector, who even hung his own bedroom with pieces representing the profane subject of Vulcan and Venus.

After the Restoration Hampton Court became again a royal residence. There the second Charles passed his honeymoon, and there he afterwards compelled his wife to receive Lady Castlemaine. But the fame of Wolsey's creation was now eclipsed by the superior splendour and commodiousness of Versailles. When the Revolution came William and Mary complained that, though the air of the place was good, the buildings had been much neglected, and were wanting in many of the conveniences of a modern palace. Under the royal direction Sir Christopher Wren demolished the old State Apartments inhabited by Henry VIII., and erected the long uniform southern and eastern fronts, towards the Thames and the gardens, on a model as remote as possible from the original design. The style adopted for the new edifice was the debased Renaissance then in vogue, which it was no easy task to harmonise even tolerably



with the remaining Tudor buildings. That the result was worthy of the architect's genius cannot be affirmed, but allowing for the difficulties with which he had to contend and the instructions by which he was cramped, it may be pronounced fairly successful. Wren's elevations are imposing from their extent, and the new rooms were stately and well-proportioned. Like the old quadrangles the additions are built of red bricks, but of a lighter colour, and with a larger use of stone in columns and dressings. The staircases and some of the principal chambers were decorated with ungraceful and gaudy frescoes by Verrio and his assistant Laguerre,—names which recall Pope's couplet :

On painted ceilings you devoutly stare,  
Where sprawl the Saints of Verrio or  
Laguerre.

More happily the delicate chisel of Grinling Gibbons was employed to execute the carvings. New gardens of spacious extent were laid out, adorned with fountains and provided with exquisite screens of wrought iron. An old separate building, called the Water Gallery, was fitted up for the Queen's use till the new palace should be complete, and was filled with a series of portraits by Kneller, known as the Hampton Court Beauties, which, after the Queen's death and the demolition of the Water Gallery, were removed to the main edifice, and are now in the room called King William's Presence Chamber. Also to gratify the Queen an orangery was formed, choice exotics were collected, and hothouses were built for their reception. When he lost her William forsook the palace for a time, and did not return till Whitehall was destroyed by fire, after which further improvements were made in the gardens, and the famous maze was formed. The designer, we are told, condemned this labyrinth for having only four stops, whereas he had given a plan for one with twenty. The seclusion of Hampton Court suited the taste of the moody Dutch King, and aided him to bear the pain of exile

from his favourite retreat in the sandy plain of Guelders. He posted thither, on his last return from the Hague, without touching London, and it was while hunting there a few weeks later that he met with the fall which caused his death.

Very early in the eighteenth century the palace and gardens became a popular resort of holiday-makers from London, who came down by road or river to see all they could, and to dine at the Toy, a famous hostelry which stood just without the western entrance, on the side opposite the site now occupied by the Mitre Hotel. Who does not know that the *Rape of the Lock* was written to heal a breach which had arisen between two families out of an incident that had taken place during an excursion of this kind? We are almost ashamed to quote, and yet we cannot refrain from quoting, the well-remembered lines :

Close by those meads, for ever crowned  
with flowers,  
Where Thames with pride surveys his  
rising towers,  
There stands a structure of majestic frame,  
Which from the neighb'ring Hampton  
takes its name.  
Here Britain's statesmen oft the fall fore-  
doom  
Of foreign tyrants and of nymphs at home ;  
Here thou great Anna ! whom three realms  
obey,  
Dost sometimes counsel take,—and some-  
times tea.

The party had come by water :

But now secure the painted vessel glides,  
The sunbeams trembling on the floating  
tides :  
While melting music steals upon the sky,  
And softened sounds along the water die ;  
Smooth flow the waves, the zephyrs gently  
play,  
Belinda smiled, and all the world was gay.

After dinner the friends sat down to a game of ombre, during which coffee was brought in ; then came the felonious assault and the catastrophe which produced the rupture :

The meeting points the sacred hair dis-  
sever  
From the fair head, for ever, and for ever !

Perhaps if one were asked to mention the liveliest period in the annals of Hampton Court, we should fix on a summer or two of the dullest reign in English history. The first royal visit after the coming of the Guelphs gave indeed little promise of gaiety. Originally George I., like William III., preferred the palace as a retreat where he could escape from the unwelcome gaze of his subjects, and enjoy life after his own fashion with his foreign favourites. Thither accordingly he retired shortly after his arrival from Germany. The places formerly occupied by Portland and Albemarle were now more than filled by Mesdames Schulenberg and Kielmansegge, whom in course of time their lover created respectively Duchess of Kendal and Countess of Darlington. Of these two elderly, ill-favoured personages, the Duchess, extremely tall and spare of figure, became known to our rude forefathers as the Maypole, while the Countess, being, as Thackeray says, a large-sized noblewoman, was, with equal irreverence, denominated the Elephant and Castle. There is a legend that the walk under the wall of the tilt-yard near the palace gate, owes its name to these two ladies. Tradition tells that they used to pace up and down together beneath the elms and chestnuts there, while awaiting the King's return from exercise, and that it was hence called Frow Walk, afterwards corrupted into Frog Walk, the name which it bears to the present day. George would sit for hours with his pipe, watching this pair cut out figures in paper for his diversion, and would clap his hands with a shout of laughter whenever the Schulenberg succeeded in producing a recognisable likeness of some courtier or officer of State. At the end of the season his sacred Majesty returned to London by water, and only on these occasions did he care to appear in any state. Six footmen preceded his sedan to the river-side; six yeomen of the guard followed; then came the ruddled mistresses in chairs borne by servants

wearing the royal livery. The suite attended, and the party embarked in barges spread with crimson cloths, while from an accompanying boat French horns and clarionets filled the air with music.

But the German Elector, who had allowed nine months to pass before he took possession of his new throne, was as eager to return to Herrenhausen as ever William of Orange had been to revisit his beloved Loo. When he set out for Hanover in the summer of 1716, he appointed his son guardian of the realm and permitted him to reside at Hampton Court. The Prince and Princess took up their abode in the State Rooms recently inhabited by Queen Anne, the ceiling of whose bedchamber had just been painted by Thornhill, and there strove by a display of graciousness and hospitality to efface the disgust which the King's boorish behaviour had already excited. The most shining wits and beauties of that time were assembled at the new Court. There sparkled Philip Dormer, Lord Stanhope, afterwards the celebrated Earl of Chesterfield, who a year before had been appointed to a post about the Prince's person, and who at the age of twenty was acknowledged to be the most accomplished gentleman of his day. Thither also came Carr Lord Hervey, elder brother of the better known John Lord Hervey, and reckoned, as Horace Walpole reports, to have had superior parts. There too were to be seen Lord Scarborough, praised by Pope, and Marlborough's brother Charles, not yet the tedious and foppish General Churchill at whom the next generation laughed, but a gallant Colonel, with laurels still fresh, and "smart in repartee." The married ladies included Lady Walpole, wife of Sir Robert, and the Princess's two bedchamber-women, Mrs. Selwyn, mother of the witty George, and the much more important Mrs. Howard. It was at Hampton Court that Henrietta Howard, afterwards Countess of Suffolk, the friend and correspondent of Swift, Pope, and Gay, was first

recognised as the established mistress of the second George. This handsome, winning, sensible person helped to make the palace as pleasant as the German Frows had made it odious. The easy morality of the age could find only one fault in her :

When all the world conspires to praise her,  
The woman's deaf, and does not hear.

But more attractive to modern taste than these older dames were the charming maids-of-honour who mingled with them in the parlour of the lady-in-waiting. Foremost among these smiled the lovely, lively Mary Bellenden, whom her contemporaries pronounced the most perfect creature they had ever known. She it was who, with arms folded before her, bade the amorous Prince stand off, and when he thought to tempt her by counting his money at her side, tossed the guineas on the floor, and springing away left his Royal Highness to gather them up alone. Hardly second to the Bellenden was her companion, the famous Molly Lepell, who seems after all to have made a more permanent impression. After being celebrated by Chesterfield and all the poets of her youth, she was complimented by Voltaire in the only English verses now extant from his pen, and to her in 1762 were dedicated the *Anecdotes of Painting*.

The season was filled with a varied round of amusements in which all these people took part. There were boating excursions, informal dinners, strolls in the gardens, games of bowls, flirtations (then called "frizelations") in shady retreats, and in the evenings cards or music, with pleasant supper-parties in Mrs. Howard's apartments which were known to her friends as the Swiss Cantons. The lovers of scandal noted afterwards that about this time Lady Walpole seemed too intimate with my Lord Carr, and that Horace Walpole, who was born next year, bore far more resemblance to the puny and sickly race of Hervey than he did to the burly and jovial

Prime Minister. Much the same society met again in the following summer, but with the difference that the old King was there to damp their enjoyment. Pope, in an often quoted letter dated September 1717, describes a visit he had recently paid to Hampton Court. "Mrs. Bellenden," he says, "and Mrs. Lepell took me into protection, contrary to the laws against harbouring papists, and gave me a dinner, with something I liked better, an opportunity of conversing with Mrs. Howard." But the King's presence had altered everything. The maids-of-honour declared that the monotony of their lives was unendurable. "And as a proof of it," adds the writer, "I need only tell you that Miss Lepell walked with me three or four hours by moonlight, and we met no creature of any quality but the King, who gave audience to the Vice-Chamberlain, all alone, under the garden-wall." In 1718 the jealous monarch had driven away his son and *cette diablesse Madame la Princesse*, who held an opposition Court at Richmond, while His Majesty, resolute for once to be gay, revived the old theatre in the Great Hall, bringing down Colley Cibber and his company to perform *Henry VIII.* and other plays before mixed audiences of invited guests. The differences between the rival Courts, however, were composed soon enough to enable the fair Bellenden and Lepell to revisit Hampton before the former wedded the heir to the dukedom of Argyle, and the latter, Pope's especial favourite, became the wife of the poet's particular aversion, John Lord Hervey. Both ladies cherished a fond recollection of happy days spent at Hampton Court. "I wish we were all in the Swiss Cantons again," writes Mrs. Campbell to Mrs. Howard; and some years later Lady Hervey, addressing the same correspondent, says: "I really believe a frizelation would be a surer means of restoring my spirits than the exercise and hartshorn I now make use of. I do not suppose that name

still exists; but pray let me know if the thing itself does, or if they meet in the same cheerful manner to sup as formerly. Are ballads and epigrams the consequence of those meetings?"

The accounts of Hampton Court under George II. offer pictures much less agreeable. We see "The Queen's chaplain mumbling through his morning office in the so-called private chapel, under the picture of the great Venus, with the door opened into the adjoining chamber, where the Queen is dressing, talking scandal to Lord Hervey, or uttering sneers at Mrs. Howard, who is kneeling with the basin at her mistress's side." We see the King come into the Gallery in the morning when the Queen is drinking chocolate, and abuse her for being always stuffing; and then turn to the other members of his family and vent the rest of his ill-humour on them, scolding Princess Amelia for not hearing him, Princess Caroline for being so fat, and the Duke of Cumberland for standing awkwardly. We see the Princess of Wales, while hourly expecting her confinement, hurried secretly down stairs by her worthless husband Frederick, forced into a coach, though on the rack with pain, and driven off to London to be delivered at St. James's. Of the general tenor of Court life in this reign we have a cabinet picture in a letter by Lord Hervey:

I will not trouble you with any account of our occupations at Hampton Court. No mill-horse ever went in a more constant track or a more unchanging circle; so that by the assistance of an almanac for the day of the week, and a watch for the hour of the day, you may inform yourself fully, without any other intelligence but your memory, of every transaction within the verge of the Court. Walking, chaises, levées, and audiences fill the morning; at night, the King plays at commerce or backgammon, and the Queen at quadrille, where poor Lady Charlotte runs her usual nightly gauntlet—the Queen pulling her hood, Mr. Schutz sputtering in her face, and the Princess Royal rapping her knuckles, all at a time. . . . The Duke of Grafton takes his nightly

opiate of lottery, and sleeps as usual between the Princesses Amelia and Carolina; Lord Grantham strolls from room to room (as Dryden says), "Like some discontented ghost that oft appears, and is forbid to speak," and stirs himself about as people stir a fire, not with any design, but in hopes to make it burn brisker; which his lordship constantly does to no purpose, and yet tries as constantly as if it had ever once succeeded. At last the King comes up, the pool finishes, and every one has their dismissal.

George II. made some alterations in the fabric of the palace, completing and decorating some of Wren's new building which had been left unfinished at the death of William III. The works were executed under the direction of Kent, a poor architect, who unfortunately was also commissioned to rebuild part of the old Clock Court, a task which he performed in a most unsatisfactory manner. After the death of Queen Caroline, George II. was little at Hampton Court, though now and then he would drive down to spend the day, accompanied by Lady Yarmouth and a small suite. "The royal party," says Walpole, "went in coaches and six in the middle of the day, with heavy horse-guards kicking up the dust before them, dined, walked an hour in the garden, returned in the same dusty parade, and his Majesty fancied himself the most gallant and lively prince in Europe." At other times the palace was open to the inspection of visitors pretty much as the State Apartments at Windsor are now. Walpole has a story that the Miss Gunnings in the first flush of their triumph, when crowds used to follow them in the streets, went to see Hampton Court, and hearing the housekeeper say to another company at the door of the Beauty Room, "This way, ladies, here are the Beauties," flew into a passion, saying that they came to see the palace, not to be shown as a sight themselves.

From the accession of George III. Hampton Court finally ceased to be a residence of the sovereign. The State Apartments were dismantled and even

Raphael's Cartoons, which had hung for nearly seventy years in the gallery built expressly for them by Wren, were removed, first to Buckingham House, afterwards to Windsor, and were not returned till 1808. The gardens, however, were suffered to continue under the care of the famous Capability Brown, who had been appointed Royal Gardener at Hampton Court in 1750, and to whom is probably due the planting in 1769 of the famous vine which has so long been one of the sights of Hampton Court. It is said that the young King had conceived an invincible repugnance to the place from his ears having been once boxed there by his choleric grandfather. At any rate, he abandoned it altogether, and the whole building, with the exception of the State Rooms, was gradually divided into suites of apartments allotted by royal favour to private persons. In 1776 Samuel Johnson applied to the Lord Chamberlain for one of these suites, and of course met with a refusal. The rooms were granted, not to men of genius and literature, but to applicants who had interest at Court or some claim on the official charged with the distribution of them. Sometimes the recipients of the King's bounty left their lodgings untenanted for long periods, or even assumed the right of sub-letting them to others, and stringent regulations had to be made against such malpractices. At the

end of the century the palace enjoyed a transient glimmer of royalty from the presence of the Prince of Orange, who, driven from the Netherlands by the Revolution, occupied from 1793 to 1813 the vacated abode of English monarchy. In later days, residences in the precincts have been occasionally given to persons not connected with noble families. Thus Michael Faraday, in 1858, was granted the Crown house on the Green, which now bears his name, and which he occupied till his death in 1867.

In 1865, the superb iron screens in the gardens, together with much furniture and tapestry from the palace, were removed to the South Kensington Museum. At the same time the palace finally lost the Cartoons, these being transferred to the same institution, where despite remonstrance it appears to have been decided as we write that they are to remain.

Here we close this hasty sketch, which can necessarily give but an imperfect idea of the patient industry, the wide research, and the various interest of Mr. Law's volumes. We can only hope that it may at least induce such of our readers as have not yet done so to study them at first hand. The work has been clearly a labour of love; and we are pleased to think it likely to meet with a better reward than is perhaps the common lot of such labours.



## A GOOD WORD FOR THE SPARROW.

I HAVE lived through three or four mad-dog panics. I remember a gentleman's housekeeper being bitten by a pampered pet dog which she was trying to make eat contrary to its inclination, persuading herself that the dog was mad (it was the time of one of these panics), becoming very ill, going to bed, persuading herself that she was suffering from hydrophobia, and barking accordingly (it was the correct thing to do in the circumstances), and yet getting well when the doctor (whom I knew) succeeded in persuading her that the dog might not have been mad after all. She lived for years afterwards. I remember a very valuable pointer being shot because it had the misfortune to be bitten by a dog reputed to be mad, which had snapped at a female who menaced it as an intruder with a stick, and in passing the pointer in its effort to escape just rased the skin with its teeth. I remember being told that two pigs said to have been bitten by one of these dogs-with-ill-names went mad, "barked like dogs," and were slain. Nay, I remember hearing that the young onions in a bed which was crossed by the said unlucky dog as it levanted after biting the pigs, went mad too, and showed it by jumping out of their places in the bed!—I never heard what their roots had to say to it—and departing this life in consequence, as sane onions would not have done. Nay, I even heard,—it was in the same county where I used to hear an unsuccessful attempt had been made to get the moon out of the water wherein she had been clearly seen by credible deponents—that the same dog bit a wheelbarrow in passing, and that it was thought safer to chain the wheelbarrow up. But that, I think, must have been of the nature

of making fun of some person or persons not named. But first and last, I think I have known of fifty to eighty dogs slain in the course of these panics, simply because they had got the bad name of having possibly been bitten by a possibly mad dog. And I am afraid my dear old familiar friend, the sparrow, has got a like bad name,—perhaps no more deserved than nineteen out of the twenty ill names those poor unlucky dogs had got.

We are told that he is a thief, a burglar, and a bully; that he takes action of ejectment without being backed by a legal writ; that he dispossesses the harmless martin of the snug mud domicile he has built for himself and partner; that he drives away the softer-billed birds, and banishes the weaker ones; that he damages the flower-seeds, and utterly ravages the labours of the kitchen-gardener; that he is such a ruffian that no bird of his own size dare attack him. Nay, even his personal looks, mien, and gestures show what a mean rascal he is; he is ugly and ill-plumaged, his movements are "graceless, heavy motions," and his note is a "monotonous chirp."

I wonder who is responsible for the charge of robinicide which hangs over the sparrow's head like a black fog over a smoky city. It is true he is made to vaunt himself of the deed; but I think, while it accounts for one of the divers ill names credited to him, still it must be looked upon as at least, what the Scottish Law Courts call, Not Proven. For, waiving the little difficulty of the bow and arrow, having still, and having had for well on to threescore years and ten, a very large and almost as intimate an acquaintance with both robins and sparrows, I have never once seen the latter

act as the aggressor in any quarrel between the two birds; but I have seen the robin attack the sparrow a hundred times, and again a hundred, and the latter turn tail,—rather ignominiously moreover, if the weights of the two parties be taken into account. Nay, even the meek, apologetic cuddy, or hedge-sparrow, holds its own if its house-brother so far forgets the dictates of prudence as to try and act the bully. And I am bound to say that in all my acquaintance with birds driven by stress of weather, or induced by the abundant and easily obtained supplies of food at my study window or on the terrace below my dining-room window, I have never seen my much-abused friend attempt to molest the stray chaffinch, larger tits, or any other bird less, or less powerfully armed than himself. Frankly, I do not hold with the doctrine that dubs him a bully. He is not half nor a quarter so much of a bully as the robin, and as regards the nuthatch, why, it is *Oliver Twist* matched against the *Beadle*. No doubt his motto, like that of other nature-led creatures, is practically, "Every one for himself and God for us all;" but I have never seen him act as if it was, "Nae halves or quarters! Haill o' my ain."

Certainly he is as independent a fellow as any bird I know. I see him sometimes in long-continued snow and persistent hard weather, on my terrace, coming and going, in parties of half-a-dozen, half-a-score, fifteen, or twenty. This year, though the snow was deep and the thermometer low, I have seldom seen more than six or eight in all. No doubt the ready explanation is that the truculent sparrow has driven him away. Still, that sounds strange; he can't very well have driven himself away! But he is not there in his wonted numbers, and he has not been in the ivy above, during the past nesting-season, in his wonted numbers; though there has been no sparrow-persecution here, nor anything that I know of calculated

to lessen their numbers. This seems to me to betoken not exactly that the sparrows are the active agents in the lessening of the numbers of small birds, but rather that they themselves are subject to the same decimating law as the house-martin, the beam-bird or spotted flycatcher, the white-throat, and the other little birds alleged nowadays to be the victims of the sparrow's high-handed behaviour and injurious usage.

But this is a digression. What I was saying was that the sparrow is an independent sort of fellow. One day, not far back, when putting down a few meat-bones, not very closely picked, had influenced the shivering and not too ravenous disposition of a pair of starlings for the customary bread-crumbs so far as to multiply the one pair by four, in flew the vivacious sparrows among the hungry lot, just as friendly as the members of a well-to-do club. They took no particular notice of the starlings, and the starlings returned the compliment. I did not even see a single nod exchanged. There seemed to me just the same sort of tacit understanding as exists among the occupants of the same table in a refreshment-room at a duly frequented railway-station. Put into our language, it would be: "Ah, you are hungry as well as we. All right; pitch in; there's plenty for all of us." As to hustling, pushing, pecking, driving away, I see ten times more of the real thing among my chickens and my pigeons when the food is just newly thrown down to them, than among the hungry birds I have fed all these years at my window.

I can fancy some one saying to me, with that peculiar and entirely pleasant tone and look adopted by the friend who intends to "shut you up" with his coming remark: "Ay, but how about those partitioned boxes you put up in the ivy for the accommodation of the starlings, some of which have been piratically appropriated by the sparrows; a proceeding which

leads, as you admit, to a good deal of 'differing' and bickering between the sparrows and the starlings when nests and eggs are about?" Well, I wonder, if it had so happened that instead of thinking a little about the sparrows as well as the starlings when those boxes were put up, I had thought entirely about the sparrows and not at all about the starlings and their little wants and comforts, whether it would have occurred to my friend, who is taking now "my contrary part," to charge the occupying starlings with being the aggressors and usurping plunderers. According to the universal bird-law,—the law of nature, in fact—the one species of bird has just as much right to those convenient apartments as the other. Even if I could have posted notices in "monotonous sparrow-chatter" and mocking-bird starling lingo, "These boxes are for the exclusive use of the starlings," or *vice versa*, I could not thereby have annulled bird-law any more than King Canute could abrogate tide-law.

But this is what sentimental writers and observers (most fallaciously so-called) habitually ignore. From the vituperations lavished upon him the sparrow must be as systematic and as deliberate a scoundrel as the scientific burglar of to-day, and with precisely the same amount of active conscience. What he does is not only done too effectually and well, but it is done through want of principle, out of mere wickedness, regardless of the right, even unfeelingly or brutally. That is really what a great deal of the clap-trap about the sparrow in his dealings with other small birds comes to, if one takes the trouble to analyse it. He is not only a bully, an oppressor, a plunderer or usurper; but he knows he is, and continues to be so in spite of his conscience, and in fact revels in his own heartlessness.

But, for my own part, while I entertain somewhat grave doubts as to the recognition among birds generally of the dictates of morality, or any delicate perception of the difference between

right and wrong, and of the nice distinction to be drawn between *meum* and *tuum*, I own to a very great doubt whether the sparrow ought to be relegated to the "criminal classes" any more than the robin, the bunting, the chaffinch, the starling, the hedge-sparrow, or any other of the birds he is supposed to be injurious to—even the pathetically pictured martin itself. If either of these birds,—or any other birds whatsoever in fact—finds a site suitable for its nest, it annexes it forthwith, whatever and wherever it may be, and maintains it unless dispossessed by superior force. Thus, in the way of illustration merely, the beam-bird, or ordinary fly-catcher, has not only built its nest in the ivy almost by prescription sacred to sparrows and starlings and rarely occupied by less than twenty nests of the two species, but has, once at least, placed its nest in one of the compartments of my partitioned boxes fixed up in the midst of the said ivy. Nay, only last year I saw the nest of a pair of these birds in a sort of way-side private letter-box, into which it was customary to drop newspapers, notices, and matters of that kind. Yet, strange to say, the owner of the quasi-pillar-post in question, who showed me the nest, did not accuse the small intruders of burglarious, usurping, or even larcenous dispositions or intentions. Equally strange too it is that, although the shieldrake, the stockdove, and the puffin often, and quite as villainously as ever sparrow with a martin's nest, dispossess the poor inoffensive rabbit, without even a beak or claws to defend himself with, of his laboriously grubbed-out burrows, just simply to place their nests,—at least, their eggs (or egg)—therein, no one seems inclined to make moan for poor bunny or affix hard names to his plunderers. That treatment is reserved for the sparrow. Indeed, I should like to send one or two of the most virulent among the sparrow's backbiters and the most pathetic retailers of the story of his evil doings to the touching vignette on p. 365,

Vol. III., of Yarrell's *British Birds*, wherein an inoffensive rabbit is portrayed sitting up in the attitude of a little dog taught to beg, forepaws held out in suppliant-wise to a puffin with menacing beak and extra-hyper-passerine impudence, whose mate is actually winking (at least the picture makes it look so) as it occupies the entrance of the burrow her mate so unceremoniously declines to cede to its rightful owner. And this is the accompanying letter-press: "Rabbit-warrens are not unfrequent on our coasts, and where this happens, the puffins often contend with the rabbits for the possession of some of the burrows." Oh, wicked puffins! to reduce yourselves thus to the level of the thieving, violent, burglarious, rightful-owner-evicting, caitiff sparrow!

Indeed, if we make our reference to commonsense and ordinary observation,—I don't mean "observation" of the amateur or popular description—I doubt very much if, within certain limits to be named presently, any of the standard allegations to the discredit of the sparrow, whether sentimental or matter-of-fact, would be held by an impartial jury to have been made out. By aid of a sort of flighty, haphazard, hand-to-mouth calculation (based, however, on local and personal knowledge of every farmstead, cottage, dwelling, hamlet, group of houses, or village, in my own wide parish, the only certainty about it being that it is under, not over the mark), I make the assumption that, at this present moment, there are in the parish not less than five hundred pairs,—or, to avoid misconception, I will say couples—of sparrows maintaining themselves from day to day. About these five hundred couples of sparrows, if I canvassed the parish round, going to every one of the multitudinous occupiers of land (considerably over one hundred in all), and asking each in his turn if he felt or thought that he had been sensibly damaged to the extent even of one penny by the dishonesty or other peccadilloes of the sparrows during the

months of October, November, December, and January just past, I do not believe that I should find one in every ten who either could or would answer my inquiry in the affirmative. If I were to go on with my catechism and ask if, during the past season, they had frequently or even occasionally seen or known of the sparrows as bullying and ill-using other birds, evicting them from their nests or nest-places, and usurping the same for themselves,—well, I think the reply would be in the form of a look and a laugh,—the look to see if I was joking, the laugh if they saw I was in earnest. But suppose I continue my calculation, and extend it to the county, and after that (as I in reality did) to the kingdom, I arrive at a total of certainly not under, and most likely greatly above, five millions of couples of sparrows, I wonder how many cases of violence, oppression, plunder, usurpation over and upon the weaker small birds could be alleged, and, much more, established. And suppose we carry the "wondering" further back, and carry it as far as the date of the first pathetic tale of evicting the martin, or any like villainy (or say for the last half century only), I wonder how many alleged,—not authenticated but alleged—instances could be produced. Is there one in a million,—I will not say one in ten thousand, one in a thousand, or one in a hundred—but is there one in a million, or one in ten millions, that has ever been heard of, or that possibly could be ferreted out?

Again, I wonder what we should think of an observing foreigner coming to England for the first time, and recording his observations, and prominent among them the note, founded on the fact that among the first natives he had seen on landing, two or three very swarthy individuals had come under his observation,—“The English are singularly dark in complexion; indeed, they might be described as tawny rather than fair!” Yet that is the way the sparrow's character is writ, wide generalisations based on

two or three, or a few separate instances.

When the charges against an accused person or party are found on examination to resolve themselves into random aspersions, or, at least, misrepresentations, it is usually held to be unnecessary to proceed very much further with the defence. Still there is the old saying, "Throw plenty of mud, and some of it is sure to stick;" and, as it seems to me, few birds have been so thoroughly well bespattered as the sparrow. Now I am not going to bring witnesses to his character, as I saw done the other day in a periodical, where the Reverends F. O. Morris, J. G. Wood, Mr. Harting, and others, were put into the witness-box, but simply to state what the general result of the observations made during a period of more than sixty-five years' close if not intimate acquaintance with him really is, as regards his character and conduct. I have seen a good deal of mischief done by him in wheat-fields when the grain was ripening. But even here I think it would be fairer to qualify the charges brought against him. According to my observation the area of his depredations is not as wide as the area of the wheat-lands said to be affected. He does not find the wheat-fields out, and fly to them on pilfering intent, in whatever part of the farmhold they may be situated. The fields near home, within easy flight of the farmstead, are the feeding-grounds that he affects; and even then it is not the whole breadth of the wheat-field that is injured by his plundering propensities. I remember when I was first big enough to be trusted with a gun (the adequate dimensions seem to have been attained in the course of my twelfth year) the field separated from my father's garden by the hedge out of which I shot my first blackbird was a wheat-field: and I think I never saw a field in which the still standing wheat was more damaged by the sparrows than that field. It was a large one, twelve or fifteen acres, the upper part of

it being not more than a hundred yards from the barnyard, stabling, and other offices. But the sparrows did not spread themselves indiscriminately over the whole area of the field; their attentions seemed to be limited to its upper part, and to the strip of it adjoining the aforesaid hedge. The "stetches" lying alongside that hedge (a nice bushy one, affording plentiful shelter for them if disturbed), and for about half down the side of the field, were verily and indeed subjected to "visitation of sparrows." The rest of the field was not touched. I have noticed the same thing again and again within the last half-score years; only here the inclosures are few of them of any great size, and even in these smaller fields the damage done is limited to the lands near the hedge. Yet to read the tirades against the sparrow and his mischievous propensities, one is left to infer that it is the great total of the wheat-field that is harried and wasted by his unscrupulous maraudings.

Again, he is charged with dire mischief on the flower-beds, and still worse in the kitchen-garden. My experience in a large garden is that half-a-dozen slugs do more mischief among the springing flower-seeds than all the birds I have about the place, inclusive of the fifteen to twenty pair of sparrows that nest in my ivy, the starling-boxes, and the fir-trees near the house. In the kitchen-garden it is true much damage is (or would be, if I permitted it) done by the small birds; but I candidly own I should not have thought of incriminating the sparrows as the principal agents. What I have found is, that the three or four pairs of greenfinches which annually nest in my shrubs do five times the mischief in stooking up the germinating seeds they affect, than all my sparrows put together. I don't say these last are entirely innocent; but I do say that, if I had only the sparrows to contend with for the integrity of my drills of radish-seed, cabbage-seed, and that of other members of the



*brassica* family, I should not have to trouble myself greatly. As it is, I find that my mustard and cress, radishes, and so forth, are most safely and efficiently protected by a few lengths of wire pea-guards, as they are called, but which might just as well be termed seed-guards from their extensive utility when so employed. I don't deny that mischief is done by the sparrows, and in the garden as well as in the field; but I do say that they are credited with a great deal that they are not responsible for, and that very much of that mischief, by whatsoever birds effected, is easily preventible. My raspberries are under galvanised wire netting, and my strawberries, gooseberries, currants, red and black, are under herring-nets spread over rough frames, or low posts and wires; about a quarter of an acre of the old nets named having been procured at an expense of less than twenty-five shillings.

I have noted above that, during the last four months the sparrows here have been practically innocuous, and I may add that they are quite safe to continue so for some time to come, even in the ways that they are so unjustly blamed for. But in the meanwhile, as in the past, and prospectively, they are "maintaining themselves." But how? If they are not living on the farmers' corn or the gardeners' seed, how are they keeping body and soul together? The ornithologists say they live on grain, seeds, insects, soft vegetables, and so on. But if we eliminate the grain and garden-seeds, as we must for so great a portion of the year, what have they to fall back upon for their subsistence? Well, I go into a farmyard, and, as I let the gate clash behind me, I disturb a flock of five-and-twenty or thirty sparrows, which fly quickly up into some adjoining tree, or to the roofs of the farm-premises close at hand, from the middenstead or dunghill, or manure-heap, or from the long litter in the fold-yard, or some such like place; and, if they are not further disturbed, in a minute or two you see them

dropping down again by ones and twos to the place they had flown from. Disturb the surface of the middenstead or dunghill, always warm from the natural "heating" going on below, and even in the winter's day you see, if not "any amount," yet certainly no small amount of animal life in the shape of insects in some stage or other of their developments. Or see the flock of sparrows again at or near the barn-door, or wherever the dust and sweepings of the barn-floor are thrown out; anyone who knows the nature of that refuse,—that, for one grain of corn (probably imperfect at the best), it contains a hundred seeds of plants that are certainly no good to the farmer—knows also what the sparrows find there to reward their sharp-eyed and diligent search. That is the way the sparrow lives through no small part of the entire year, doing no appreciable harm, utilising what otherwise would be wasted, consuming what would, if left uninterfered with, have been more or less noxious to the land and its cultivators.

But further, I have the sparrow close under my eye and actual observation any day or every day, but especially in times of continued frost and snow, and also when the cares and occupations of the nesting season are upon him. What I am told by the sentimental or perfunctory observer is one thing: what I see is another. I am told he is a bully and injurious to other small birds, that he is a feathered dog-in-the-manger and usurper, that he is bellicose and pugnacious. Of course he is pugnacious and fights; he would not be bird if it was otherwise. But it is with his own kind, and I really don't think that he is worse than other birds, or different from them in that respect. I have seen his neighbours in my ivy, the starlings, so resolute and so bitter in their hostilities one with the other, that they did not in the least mind my quoting good Dr. Watts to them from the window, but kept on with their scrimmage, grappled together in a

struggling, dishevelled feather-mass till I had had time to leave the room, tread the passage to the door, and go round most part of two sides of the house, stoop down and almost touch them with my outstretched hand, before they would give over and try to escape from a man's clutch. The sparrows, on the other hand, are much more amenable; the gentle reminder that

"Your little claws were never made  
To scratch each other's eyes,"

addressed to them from the window, has generally a soothing effect. One day too, in this garden, I saw a triangular duel between three cock partridges for the love of one lady partridge, who sat calmly by on a flower-bed, taking no apparent interest in the issue of the fight. Perhaps she took a pride in being fought about; perhaps she was totally indifferent as to who got the mastery, thinking them all equally game birds. Anyway she sat there, stolid and immobile, save that now and then she preened a feather or two. But the three combatants fought heroically on, although I had advanced within four or five yards of them, and but for the fact that Miss P. felt shy at my approach, they might have been fighting still for all I can tell. Often too, in the old days before driving was, and when old grouse had the dominancy of the moor, I have seen from three to five old cocks holding a private tournament as to which of them should win some as yet undeclared moor-bird Queen of Beauty. They wheeled and they flew in wide circles, but never in a straight course, never heeding me or my gun, sometimes two only, then three or four, then all in a rough-and-tumble together, so that if I had been sanguinarily inclined I could have bagged the whole lot with a couple of well-considered shots. And certainly the sparrows are no exception to this bird-rule; though (probably from their more intimate acquaintance with humanity) they never lose their presence of mind in such

cases to the same extent as the starling, partridge, and grouse do.

But as to the rest of it: in the hungriest times I never see the sparrow attack his marrows in size or nearly so; and, what is very much more to the purpose, I never see, nor ever have seen, any signs of apprehension, of even striking recognition on the part of other small birds, occasioned by the advent of one or a dozen sparrows. If a cat or a kitten, or even a dog, shows itself anywhere near, up fly the birds, some into the ivy, some to the neighbouring thorn, the blackbirds and so on to more distant shelter. If I show myself abruptly at the window, much the same sort of stampede takes place. But the advent of a whole troop of sparrows makes not the slightest apparent difference to the company assembled, hedge-sparrows, chaffinches, robins, or what not. To be sure, if one of the new arrivals seems to affect a morsel to which a robin has already attached himself, or even appears likely to direct his attention that way, the robin, in nine cases out of ten, gives him a decided hint with his sharp bill to "keep out of that;" and I never yet saw even the pawkiest sparrow venture to stand up to the aggressive redbreast.

As to what I have seen well called "the ridiculous notion of his driving other birds away," or "displacing other birds more valuable than himself," or having to do with the diminution in the numbers of whitethroats, chaffinches and tits, and all the rest of that farrago of nonsense, I do not so much question the alleged facts on which it is made to depend, as deny them altogether. It is a fact that during the severe snowy weather we had a few weeks ago my usual number of pensioner sparrows had dwindled down to four or five couple in place of the pristine ten, twelve, or fifteen couple. But I do not allege it as a fact that these diminished numbers are due to a league of the starlings (who were present to the number of four pairs, contrary to all precedent), robins, cuddies, chaffinches, &c., formed against

the sparrows; although if I did, it would be just as reasonable and just as well supported as these contrary statements under notice. I used to see great flocks of greenfinches, numbering many scores, sometimes even two or three hundreds, in our corn stubbles during the late autumn and early winter, while of late years the numbers are strangely reduced. But I think there is another way of accounting for such diminution, besides attributing it to any cause analogous to the alleged hostile action of the sparrow,—a cause too much more in harmony with the ascertained laws of nature. There are fewer slovenly farmers than there used to be. The greenfinches had, what a gardener of mine once termed, “a lavishing time of it” when whole farms had their cornfields yellow with charlock while the corn was growing, and strewn with its seed after harvest. And real observers know well enough that the questions of adequate supply of food and varying climatic influences have more to do with the presence or absence of birds in successive seasons than any such utterly inadequate causes as the alleged hostility or usurping aggression of some other, and especially only a single, species of birds.

As to my friend the sparrow’s “graceless, heavy motions,” his “monotonous chirp,” and (to put it gently) painful lack of beauty, one would think that ordinary dwellers in the country have neither ears nor eyes. And yet, I used to think that “monotonous” was hardly the word to apply when a dozen or two of sparrows were having, as they so frequently do have, a good lively little squabble among themselves. Their gamut seemed to me to be one of very considerable range. And besides, although I should be sorry to claim for them the merits of distinguished vocalists, still there are to my ear few country sounds more pleasant than the soft chirp of a flock of sparrows when the day with all its occupations and excitements is ended, and they are just cosily talking it over before bidding

good-night with mutual assurances of good feeling.

As to his vesture, it may not be a Joseph’s coat; nor am I quite sure that the matutinal walking-dress of a certain distinguished character when about to “visit his snug little farm,” entirely commends itself to my taste. Certainly the sparrow is not arrayed like that particular “old gentleman,” and, for one, I had rather that he was not. I have as delicately painted a portrait of the cock sparrow as any that, so far as I know, exists in any gallery, now before me; and as I look at the well-chosen shades of his costume, so harmoniously arranged and so good in themselves, chestnuts and browns thrown up and relieved by pure whites and good blacks, and himself so well groomed and nattily arranged, I think I admire him considerably more than the great majority of those Lords of the Bird Realm whose court-dress has given occasion to the somewhat sarcastic remark that “fine feathers make fine birds.” Of course I may be, very likely am, only manifesting my bad taste, or showing that I have “no eye for beauty.” Indeed, I am almost afraid that I may have no eye at all, because I have never yet perceived the “graceless, heavy motions” of these inferior and reprobate birds. In my blindness, or at least incapacity to see clearly, I had fancied that the movements of the “pert,” the “impudent” sparrow were the reverse of heavy; were, rather, active, brisk, alert. The motions of a toad are possibly somewhat graceless and heavy; nor would I call those of a gawky Cochin China fowl, as it hurries out of the way of an advancing vehicle, either light or graceful. But then, the imperfection of my vision is such that I cannot compare the quick, brisk flight of the sparrow, his natural, easy equilibrium as he alights, his perfect self-possession as with bright eye he surveys the scene, to the movements of either the chicken or the toad.

J. C. ATKINSON.

## LORD BEAUPREY.

(IN THREE PARTS ; PART I.)

## I.

SOME reference had been made to Northerley, which was within an easy drive, and Firminger described how he had dined there the night before and had found a lot of people. Mrs. Ashbury, one of the two visitors, inquired who these people might be, and he mentioned half-a-dozen names, among which was that of young Raddle, which had been a good deal on people's lips, and even in the newspapers, on the occasion, still recent, of his stepping into the fortune, exceptionally vast even as the product of a patent glue, left him by a father whose ugly name on all the vacant spaces of the world had exasperated generations of men.

"Oh, is he there?" asked Mrs. Ashbury, in a tone which might have been taken as a vocal translation of the act of pricking up one's ears. She didn't hand on the information to her daughter, who was talking,—if a beauty of so few phrases could have been said to talk—with Mary Gosselin, but in the course of a few moments she put down her teacup with a little short, sharp movement, and, getting up, gave the girl a poke with her parasol. "Come, Maud, we must be stirring."

"You pay us a very short visit," said Mrs. Gosselin, intensely demure over the fine web of her knitting. Mrs. Ashbury looked hard for an instant into her bland eyes, then she gave poor Maud another poke. She alluded to a reason and expressed regrets; but she got her daughter into motion, and Guy Firminger passed through the garden with the two

ladies to put them into their carriage. Mrs. Ashbury protested particularly against any further escort. While he was absent the other mother and daughter, sitting together on their pretty lawn in the yellow light of the August afternoon, talked of the frightful way Maud Ashbury had "gone off," and of something else as to which there was more to say when their third visitor came back.

"Don't think me grossly inquisitive if I ask you where they told the coachman to drive," said Mary Gosselin as the young man dropped, near her, into a low wicker chair, stretching his long legs as if he were one of the family.

Firminger stared. "Upon my word I didn't particularly notice,—but I think the old lady said 'Home'!"

"There, mamma dear!" the girl exclaimed, triumphantly.

But Mrs. Gosselin only knitted on, persisting in profundity. She replied that "Home" was a feint, that Mrs. Ashbury would already have given another order, and that it was her wish to hurry off to Northerley that had made her keep them from going with her to the carriage, in which they would have seen her take a suspected direction. Mary explained to Guy Firminger that her mother had perceived poor Mrs. Ashbury to be frantic to reach the house at which she had heard that Mr. Raddle was staying. The young man stared again and wanted to know what she desired to do with Mr. Raddle. Mary replied that her mother would tell him what Mrs. Ashbury desired to do with poor Maud.

"What all Christian mothers desire," said Mrs. Gosselin; "only she doesn't know how."

"To marry the dear child to Mr. Raddle," Mary added, smiling.

Firminger stared more than ever. "Do you mean that you want to marry *your* dear child to that little cad?" he inquired of the elder lady.

"I speak of the general duty,—not of the particular case," said Mrs. Gosselin.

"Mamma *does* know how," Mary went on.

"Then why ain't you married?" asked Firminger.

"Because we're not acting, like the Ashburys, with injudicious precipitation. Isn't that about it?" the girl demanded, laughing, of her mother.

"Laugh at me, my dear, as much as you like; it's very lucky you've got me," Mrs. Gosselin declared.

"She means I can't manage for myself," said Mary to the visitor.

"What nonsense you talk," Mrs. Gosselin murmured, counting stitches.

"I can't, mamma, I can't; I admit it!" Mary continued.

"But injudicious precipitation and,—what's the other thing?—creeping prudence—seem to come out in very much the same place," the young man objected.

"Do you mean since I too wither on the tree?"

"It only comes back to saying how hard it is, nowadays, to marry one's daughters," said the lucid Mrs. Gosselin, saving Firminger, however, the trouble of an ingenious answer. "I don't contend that, at the best, it's easy."

But Guy Firminger would not have struck you as capable of much conversational effort as he lounged there in the summer softness, with ironic familiarities, like one of the old friends who rarely deviate into sincerity. He was a robust but loose-limbed young man, with a well-shaped head and a smooth, fair, kind face. He was in knickerbockers, and his clothes, which had seen service, were

composed of articles that didn't match. His laced boots were dusty,—he had evidently walked a certain distance; an indication confirmed by the lingering, sociable way in which, in his basket-seat, he tilted himself towards Mary Gosselin. It pointed to a pleasant reason for a long walk. This young lady, of five-and-twenty, had black hair and blue eyes; a combination often associated with the effect of beauty. The beauty in this case, however, was dim and latent, not vulgarly obvious; and if her height and slenderness gave that impression of length of line which, as we know, is the fashion, Mary Gosselin had, on the other hand, too much expression to be generally admired. Every one thought her "clever"; a few of the most simple-minded even thought her plain. What Guy Firminger thought,—or rather what he took for granted, for he was not built up on depths of reflection—will probably appear from this narrative.

"Yes indeed; things have come to a pass that's awful for *us*," the girl announced.

"For *us*, you mean," said Firminger. "We're hunted like the ostrich; we're trapped and stalked and run to earth. We go in fear,—I assure you we do."

"Are *you* hunted, Guy?" Mrs. Gosselin asked, with an inflection of her own.

"Yes, Mrs. Gosselin, even *moi qui vous parle*, the ordinary male of commerce, inconceivable as it may appear. I know something about it."

"And of whom do you go in fear?" Mary Gosselin asked, taking up an uncut book and a paper-knife which she had laid down on the advent of the other visitors.

"My dear child, of Diana and her nymphs, of the spinster at large. She's always out with her rifle. And it isn't only that; you know there's always a second gun, a walking arsenal at her heels. I forget, for the moment, who Diana's mother was, and the genealogy of the nymphs; but not



only do the old ladies know the younger ones are out, they distinctly go *with* them."

"Who was Diana's mother, my dear?" Mrs. Gosselin inquired of her daughter.

"She was a beautiful old lady with pink ribbons in her cap and a genius for knitting," the girl replied, cutting her book.

"Oh, I'm not speaking of you two dears; you're not like any one else; you're an immense comfort," said Guy Firminger. "But they've reduced it to a science, and I assure you that if one were any one in particular, if one were not protected by one's obscurity, one's life would be a burden. Upon my honour one wouldn't escape. I've seen it, I've watched them. Look at poor Beauprey,—look at little Raddle over there. He's offensive, but I bleed for him."

"Lord Beauprey won't marry again," said Mrs. Gosselin, with an air of conviction.

"So much the worse for him!"

"Come,—that's a concession to our charms!" Mary laughed.

But the ruthless young man explained away his concession. "I mean that to be married's the only protection,—or else to be engaged."

"To be permanently engaged,—wouldn't that do?" Mary Gosselin asked.

"Beautifully,—I would try it if I were a *parti*."

"And how's the little boy?" Mrs. Gosselin presently inquired.

"What little boy?"

"Your little cousin,—Lord Beauprey's child; isn't it a boy?"

"Oh, poor little beggar, he isn't up to much. He was awfully damaged by that scarlet fever."

"You're not the rose, indeed, but you're tolerably near it," the elder lady presently continued.

"What do you call near it? Not even in the same garden,—not in any garden at all, alas!"

"There are three lives,—but after all!"

"Dear lady, don't be homicidal!"

"What do you call the 'rose'?" Mary asked of her mother.

"The title," said Mrs. Gosselin, promptly but softly.

Something in her tone made Firminger laugh aloud. "You don't mention the property."

"Oh, I mean the whole thing."

"Is the property very large?" said Mary Gosselin.

"Fifty thousand a year," her mother responded; at which the young man laughed out again.

"Take care, mamma, or we shall expose ourselves to mythological comparisons!" the girl exclaimed; a warning that elicited from Guy Firminger the just remark that there would be time enough for that when his prospects should be worth speaking of. He leaned over to pick up his hat and stick, as if it were his time to go, but he didn't go for another quarter of an hour, and during these minutes his prospects received some consideration. He was Lord Beauprey's first cousin, and the three interposing lives were his lordship's own, that of his little sickly son, and that of his uncle the Major, who was also Guy's uncle and with whom the young man was at present staying. It was from homely Trist, the Major's house, that he had walked over to Mrs. Gosselin's. Frank Firminger, who had married in youth a woman with something of her own and eventually left the army, had nothing but girls, but he was only of middle age and might possibly still have a son. At any rate, his life was a very good one. Beauprey might marry again, and, marry or not, he was barely thirty-three and might live to a great age. The child, moreover, poor little devil, would doubtless, with the growing consciousness of an incentive, develop a capacity for duration; so that altogether Guy professed himself, with the best will in the world, unable to take a rosy view of the disappearance of obstacles. He treated the subject with a jocularly that, in view of the remoteness of his chance,

was not wholly tasteless, and the discussion, between old friends and in the light of this extravagance, was less crude than perhaps it sounds. The young man quite declined to see any latent brilliancy in his future. They had all been lashing him up, his poor dear mother, his uncle Frank, and Beauprey as well, to make that future political; but even if he should get in (he was nursing—oh, so languidly!—a possible opening), it would only be into the shallow edge of the stream. He would stand there like a tall idiot with the water up to his ankles. He didn't know how to swim,—in that element; he didn't know how to do anything.

"I think you're very perverse, my dear," said Mrs. Gosselin. "I'm sure you have great dispositions."

"For what,—except for sitting here and talking with you and Mary? I like this sort of thing, but scarcely anything else."

"You'd do very well if you weren't so lazy," Mary said. "I believe you're the very laziest person in the world."

"So do I,—the very laziest in the world," the young man contentedly replied. "But how can I regret it, when it keeps me so quiet, when (I might even say,) it makes me so amiable?"

"You'll have, one of these days, to get over your quietness, and perhaps even a little over your amiability," Mrs. Gosselin sagaciously stated.

"I devoutly hope not."

"You'll have to perform the duties of your position."

"Do you mean keep my stump of a broom in order and my crossing irreproachable?"

"You may say what you like; you will be a *parti*," Mrs. Gosselin continued.

"Well, then, if the worst comes to the worst I shall do what I said just now, I shall get some good plausible girl to see me through."

"The proper way to 'get' her will be to marry her. After you're married you won't be a *parti*."

"Dear mamma, he'll think you're already beginning the siege!" Mary Gosselin laughingly wailed.

Guy Firminger looked at her a moment. "I say, Mary, wouldn't you do?"

"For the good plausible girl? Should I be plausible enough?"

"Surely,—what could be more natural? Everything would seem to contribute to the suitability of our alliance. I should be known to have known you for years,—from childhood's sunny hour; I should be known to have bullied you, and even to have been bullied by you, in the period of pinafores. My relations from a tender age with your brother, which led to our schoolroom romps in holidays, and to the happy footing on which your mother has always been so good as to receive me here, would add to all the presumptions of intimacy. People would accept such a conclusion as inevitable."

"Among all your reasons you don't mention the young lady's attractions," said Mary Gosselin.

Firminger stared a moment, his clear eye lighted by his happy thought. "I don't mention the young man's. They would be so obvious, on one side and the other, as to be taken for granted."

"And is it your idea that one should pretend to be engaged to you all one's life?"

"Oh no, simply till I should have had time to look round. I'm determined not to be hustled and bewildered into matrimony,—to be dragged to the altar before I know where I am. With such an arrangement as the one I speak of I should be able to take my time, to keep my head, to make my choice."

"And how would the young lady make hers?"

"How do you mean, hers?"

"The selfishness of men is something exquisite. Suppose the young lady,—if it's conceivable that you should find one idiotic enough to be a party to such a transaction—suppose

the poor girl herself should happen to wish to be really engaged?"

Guy Firminger thought a moment, with his slow but not stupid smile. "Do you mean to *me*?"

"To you,—or to some one else."

"Oh, if she'd give me notice, I'd let her off."

"Let her off till you could find a substitute?"

"Yes,—but I confess it would be a great inconvenience. People wouldn't take the second one so seriously."

"She would have to make a sacrifice; she would have to wait till you should know where you were?" Mrs. Gosselin suggested.

"Yes, but where would *her* advantage come in?" Mary persisted.

"Only in the pleasure of charity; the moral satisfaction of doing a fellow a good turn," said Firminger.

"You must think one is eager to oblige you!"

"Ah, but surely I could count on *you*, couldn't I?" the young man asked.

Mary had finished cutting her book; she got up and flung it down on the tea-table. "What a preposterous conversation!" she exclaimed with force, tossing the words from her as she had tossed her book; and, looking round her vaguely a moment, without meeting Guy Firminger's eye, she walked away to the house.

Firminger sat watching her; then he said, serenely, to her mother: "Why has Mary left us?"

"She has gone to get something, I suppose."

"What has she gone to get?"

"A little stick to beat you, perhaps."

"You don't mean I've been objectionable?"

"Dear, no,—I'm joking. One thing is very certain," pursued Mrs. Gosselin; "that you ought to work and to try to get on exactly as if nothing could ever happen. Oughtn't you?" she insisted, as her visitor continued silent.

"I'm sure she doesn't like it!" he

exclaimed, without heeding her question.

"Doesn't like what?"

"The bad taste of my intellectual flights."

"You're very clever; she always likes *that*," said Mrs. Gosselin. "You ought to go in for something serious, for something honourable," she continued, "just as much as if you had nothing at all to look to."

"Words of wisdom, dear Mrs. Gosselin," Firminger replied, rising slowly from his relaxed attitude. "But what *have* I to look to?"

She raised her mild, deep eyes to him as he stood before her,—she might have been a fairy godmother. "Everything!"

"But you know I can't poison them!"

"That won't be necessary."

He looked at her an instant; then, with a laugh: "One might think *you* would undertake it!"

"I almost would,—for *you*. Good-bye."

"Take care, — if they *should* be carried off!" But Mrs. Gosselin only repeated her good-bye, and the young man departed before Mary had come back.

## II.

NEARLY two years after Guy Firminger had spent that friendly hour in Mrs. Gosselin's little garden in Hampshire, this far-seeing woman was enabled (by the return of her son, who, in New York, in an English bank, occupied a position in which they all rejoiced, to such great things might it possibly lead,) to resume possession for the season of the little house in London which her husband had left her to live in, but which her native thrift, in determining her to let it for a term, had converted into a source of income. Hugh Gosselin, who was thirty years old and had been despatched to America at twenty-three, before his father's death, to exert himself, was understood to be

doing very well,—so well that his devotion to the interests of his employers had been rewarded, for the first time, with a real holiday. He was to remain in England from May to August, undertaking, as he said, to make it all right if during this time his mother should occupy (to contribute to his entertainment) the habitation in Chester Street. He was a small, preoccupied young man, with a sharpness as acquired as a new coat; he struck his mother and sister as intensely American. For the first few days after his arrival they were startled by his intonations, though they admitted that they had had an escape when he reminded them that he might have brought with him an accent embodied in a wife.

"When you do take one," said Mrs. Gosselin, who regarded such an accident, over there, as inevitable, "you must charge her high for it."

It was not with this question, however, that the little family in Chester Street was mainly engaged, but with the last incident in the extraordinary succession of events which, like a chapter of romance, had in the course of a few months converted their vague and impecunious friend Guy Firminger into a personage envied and honoured. It was as if a blight had been cast on all his hindrances. On the day Hugh Gosselin sailed from New York the delicate little boy at Bosco had succumbed to an attack of diphtheria. His father had died of typhoid the previous winter at Naples; his uncle, a few weeks later, had had a fatal accident in the hunting-field. So strangely, so rapidly had the situation cleared up, had his fate and theirs worked for him. Guy had waked up one morning to an earldom which carried with it a fortune not alone nominally but really great. Mrs. Gosselin and Mary had not written to him, but they knew he was at Bosco; he had remained there after the funeral of the late little lord. Mrs. Gosselin, who heard everything, had heard

somehow that he was behaving with the greatest consideration, giving the guardians, the trustees, whatever they were called, plenty of time to do everything. Everything was comparatively simple; in the absence of collaterals there were so few other people concerned. The principal relatives were poor Frank Firminger's widow and her girls, who had seen themselves so near to new honours and luxuries. Probably the girls would expect their cousin Guy to marry one of them, and think it the least he could decently do; a view the young man himself (if he were very magnanimous) might possibly take. The question would be whether he would be very magnanimous. These young ladies were, without exception, almost painfully plain. On the other hand Guy Firminger,—or Lord Beauprey, as one would have to begin to call him now—was unmistakably kind. Mrs. Gosselin appealed to her son as to whether their noble friend were not unmistakably kind.

"Of course I've known him always, and that time he came out to America,—when was it? four years ago—I saw him every day. I like him awfully and all that, but since you push me, you know," said Hugh Gosselin, "I'm bound to say that the first thing to mention in any description of him would be,—if you wanted to be quite correct—that he's unmistakably selfish."

"I see,—I see," Mrs. Gosselin thoughtfully replied. "Of course I know what you mean," she added, in a moment. "But is he any more so than any one else? Every one's unmistakably selfish."

"Every one but you and Mary," said the young man.

"And *you*, dear!" his mother smiled. "But a person may be kind, you know,—mayn't he?—at the same time that he is selfish. There are different sorts."

"Different sorts of kindness?" Hugh Gosselin asked with a laugh; and

the inquiry undertaken by his mother occupied them for the moment, demanding a subtlety of treatment from which they were not conscious of shrinking, of which, rather, they had an idea that they were perhaps exceptionally capable. They came back to the fundamental proposition that Guy Firminger was indolent, that he would probably never do anything great, but that he might show himself all the same a delightful member of society. Yes, he was probably selfish, like other people; but unlike most of them he was, somehow, amiably, attachingly, sociably, almost lovably selfish. Without doing anything great he would yet be a great success,—a big, pleasant, gossiping, lounging and, in its way, doubtless very splendid presence. He would have no ambition, and it was ambition that made selfishness ugly. Hugh and his mother were sure of this last point until Mary, before whom the discussion, when it reached this stage, happened to be carried on, checked them by asking whether that, on the contrary, were not just what was supposed to make it fine.

"Oh, he only wants to be comfortable," said her brother; "but he *does* want."

"There'll be a tremendous rush for him," Mrs. Gosselin prophesied to her son.

"Oh, he'll never marry. It will be too much trouble."

"It's done here without any trouble,—for the men. One sees how long you've been out of the country."

"There was a girl in New York whom he might have married,—he really liked her. But he wouldn't turn round for her."

"Perhaps she wouldn't turn round for him," said Mary.

"I dare say she'll turn round *now*," Mrs. Gosselin rejoined; on which Hugh mentioned that there was nothing to be feared from her, all the revolutions had been accomplished. He added that nothing would make any difference,—so intimate was his

conviction that Beauprey would preserve his independence.

"Then I think he's not so selfish as you say," Mary declared; "or at any rate one will never know whether he is. Isn't married life the great chance to show it?"

"Your father never showed it," said Mrs. Gosselin; and as her children were silent in presence of this tribute to the departed, she added, smiling, "Perhaps you think that *I* did!" They embraced her, to indicate what they thought, and the conversation ended, when she had remarked that Lord Beauprey was a man who would be perfectly easy to manage *after* marriage, with Hugh's exclaiming that this was doubtless exactly why he wished to keep out of it.

Such was evidently his wish, as they were able to judge in Chester Street, when he came up to town. He appeared there oftener than was to have been expected, not taking himself, in his new character, at all too seriously to find stray half-hours for old friends. It was plain that he was going to do just as he liked, that he was not a bit excited or uplifted by his change of fortune. Mary Gosselin observed that he had no imagination,—she even reproached him with the deficiency to his face; an incident which showed indeed how little seriously *she* took him. He had no idea of playing a part, and yet he would have been clever enough. He wasn't even theoretic about being simple; his simplicity was a series of accidents and indifferences. Never was a man more conscientiously superficial. There were matters on which he valued Mrs. Gosselin's judgment and asked her advice,—without, as usually appeared later, ever taking it; such questions, mainly, as the claims of a predecessor's servants and those, in respect to social intercourse, of the clergyman's family. He didn't like his parson,—what was he to do? What he did like was to talk with Hugh about American investments, and it was amusing to Hugh, though he tried not to show his



amusement, to find himself looking at Guy Firminger in the light of capital. To Mary he addressed from the first the oddest snatches of confidential discourse, rendered in fact, however, by the levity of his tone, considerably less confidential than in intention. He had something to tell her that he joked about, yet without admitting that it was any less important for being laughable. It was neither more nor less than that Charlotte Firminger, the eldest of his late uncle's four girls, had designated to him in the clearest manner the person she considered he ought to marry. She appealed to his sense of justice, she spoke and wrote, or at any rate she looked and moved, she sighed and sang, in the name of common honesty. He had had four letters from her that week, and to his knowledge there were a series of people in London, people she could bully, whom she had got to promise to take her in for the season. She was going to be on the spot, she was going to follow him up. He took his stand on common honesty, but he had a mortal horror of Charlotte. At the same time, when a girl had a jaw like that and had marked you,—really *marked* you, mind, you felt your safety oozing away. He had given them during the past three months, all those terrible girls, no end of presents; but every present had only been held to constitute another pledge. Therefore what was a fellow to do? Besides, there were other portents; the air was thick with them, as the sky over battlefields was darkened by the flight of vultures. They were flocking, the birds of prey, from every quarter, and every girl in England, by Jove! was going to be thrown at his head. What had he done to deserve such a fate? He wanted to stop in England and see all sorts of things through; but how could he stand there and face such a scramble? Yet what good would it do to bolt? Wherever he should go there would be fifty of them there first. On his honour he could say that he didn't deserve it; he had never, to his own

sense, been a flirt, such a flirt as to have given any one a handle. He appealed candidly to Mary Gosselin to know whether his past conduct justified such penalties. "*Have* I been a flirt?—have I given any one a handle?" he inquired with pathetic intensity.

She met his appeal by declaring that he had been awful, committing himself right and left; and this manner of treating his quandary contributed to the sarcastic publicity (as regarded the little house in Chester Street) which presently became its element. Lord Beauprey's comical and yet thoroughly grounded view of his danger was soon a frequent theme among the Gosselins, who, however, had their own reasons for not communicating the alarm. They had no motive for concealing their interest in their old friend, but their allusions to him among their other friends may be said on the whole to have been studied. His state of mind recalled of course to Mary and her mother the queer talk about his prospects that they had had that afternoon in the country, in which Mrs. Gosselin had been so strangely prophetic (she confessed that she had had a flash of divination; the future had been mysteriously revealed to her), and poor Guy too had seen himself quite as he was to be. He had seen his nervousness, under inevitable pressure, deepen to a panic, and he now, in intimate hours, made no attempt to disguise that a panic had become his portion. It was a fixed idea with him that he should fall a victim to woven toils, be caught in a trap constructed with superior science. The science evolved in an enterprising age by this branch of industry, the manufacture of the trap matrimonial, he had terrible anecdotes to illustrate; and what had he on his lips but a scientific term when he declared, as he perpetually did, that it was his fate to be hypnotised?

Mary Gosselin reminded him, they each in turn reminded him, that his safeguard was to fall in love; were he once to put himself under that protec-

tion all the mothers and maids in Mayfair would not prevail against him. He replied that that was just the impossibility ; it took leisure and calmness and opportunity and a free mind to fall in love, and never was a man less furnished with such conveniences. You couldn't at any rate do it *à point nommé*. He reminded the girl of his old fancy for pretending already to have disposed of his hand, if he could put that hand on a young person who should like him well enough to be willing to participate in the fraud. She would have to place herself in rather a false position, of course,—have to take a certain amount of trouble ; but there would after all be a good deal of fun in it (there was always fun in duping the world,) between the pair themselves, the two happy comedians.

"Why should they both be happy?" Mary Gosselin asked. "I understand why you should ; but, frankly, I don't quite grasp the reason of *her* pleasure."

Lord Beauprey, with his clear eyes, thought a moment. "Why, for the lark, as they say, and that sort of thing. I should be awfully nice to her."

"She would need indeed to be 'larky,' I think!"

"Ah, but I should want a good sort,—a quiet, reasonable one, you know!" he somewhat eagerly interposed.

"You're too delightful!" Mary Gosselin exclaimed, continuing to laugh. He thanked her for this appreciation, and she returned to her point—that she didn't really see the advantage his accomplice could hope to enjoy as her compensation for extreme inconvenience.

Guy Firminger stared. "But what extreme inconvenience——?"

"Why, it would take a lot of time ; it might become intolerable."

"You mean I ought to pay her,—to hire her for the season?"

Mary Gosselin looked at him a moment. "Wouldn't marriage come cheaper at once?" she asked with a quieter smile.

"You *are* laughing at me!" he sighed, forgivingly. "Of course she

would have to be good-natured enough to pity me."

"Pity's akin to love. If she were good-natured enough to want so to help you, she'd be good-natured enough to want to marry you. That would be *her* idea of help."

"Would it be *yours*?" Lord Beauprey asked, rather eagerly.

"You're too absurd! You must sail your own boat!" the girl answered, turning away.

That evening, at dinner, she stated to her companions that she had never seen a fatuity so dense, so serene, so preposterous as his lordship's.

"Fatuity, my dear! what do you mean?" her mother inquired.

"Oh, mamma, you know perfectly." Mary Gosselin spoke with a certain impatience.

"If you mean he's conceited, I'm bound to say I don't agree with you," her brother observed.

"He's not vain, he's not proud, he's not pompous," said Mrs. Gosselin.

Mary was silent a moment. "He takes more things for granted than any one I ever saw."

"What sort of things?"

"Well, one's interest in his affairs."

"With old friends, surely, a gentleman may."

"Of course," said Hugh Gosselin, "old friends have in turn the right to take for granted a corresponding interest on *his* part."

"Well, who could be nicer to us than he is or come to see us oftener?" his mother asked.

"He comes exactly for the purpose I speak of,—to talk about himself," said Mary.

"There are thousands of girls who would be delighted that he should," Mrs. Gosselin returned.

"We agreed long ago that he's intensely selfish," the girl went on ; "and if I speak of it to-day it's not because that in itself is anything of a novelty. What I'm freshly struck with is simply that he more flagrantly shows it."

"He shows it, exactly," said Hugh ;

"he shows all there is. There it is, on the surface ; there are not depths of it underneath."

"He's not hard," Mrs. Gosselin contended ; "he's not hard."

"Do you mean he's soft?" Mary asked.

"I mean he's easy." And Mrs. Gosselin, with considerable expression, looked across at her daughter. She added, before they rose from dinner, that poor Lord Beauprey had plenty of difficulties and that she thought, for her part, they ought in common loyalty to do what they could to assist him.

For a week nothing more passed between the two ladies on the subject of their noble friend, and in the course of this week they had the amusement of receiving in Chester Street a member of Hugh's American circle, Mr. Boston-Brown, a young man from New York. He was a person engaged in large affairs, for whom Hugh Gosselin professed the highest regard, from whom in New York he had received much hospitality, and for whose advent he had from the first prepared his companions. Mrs. Gosselin begged the amiable stranger to stay with them, and if she failed to vanquish his hesitation it was because his hotel was near at hand and he should be able to see them often. It became evident that he would do so, and, to the two ladies, as the days went by, equally evident that no objection to such a relation was likely to arise. Mr. Boston-Brown was delightfully fresh ; the most usual expressions acquired on his lips a well-nigh comical novelty, the most superficial sentiments, in the look with which he accompanied them, a really touching sincerity. He was unmarried and good-looking, clever and

natural, and if he was not very rich he was, at least, very free-handed. He literally strewed the path of the ladies in Chester Street with flowers, he choked them with French confectionery. Hugh, however, who was often rather mysterious on monetary questions, placed in a light sufficiently clear the fact that his friend had in Wall Street (they knew all about Wall Street) improved the shining hour. They introduced him to Lord Beauprey, who thought him "tremendous fun," as Hugh said, and who immediately declared that the four must spend a Sunday at Bosco a week or two later. The date of this visit was fixed,—Mrs. Gosselin had uttered a comprehensive acceptance ; but after Guy Firminger had taken leave of them (this had been his first appearance since the odd conversation with Mary), our young lady confided to her mother that she should not be able to join the little party. She expressed the conviction that it would be all that was essential if Mrs. Gosselin should go with the two others. On being pressed to communicate the reason of this aloofness Mary was able to give no better one than that she never had cared for Bosco.

"What makes you hate him so?" her mother broke out in a moment, in a tone which brought the red to the girl's cheek. Mary denied that she entertained for Lord Beauprey any sentiment so intense ; to which Mrs. Gosselin rejoined with some sternness and, no doubt, considerable wisdom : "Look out what you do, then, or you'll be thought to be in love with him !"

HENRY JAMES.

*(To be continued.)*

## THE STRANGER IN THE HOUSE.

THE Duke of Wellington was accustomed to say that the presence or absence of Napoleon in the field made a difference of forty thousand men. It would perhaps be difficult to form an estimate of this kind as to the exact value of Mr. Gladstone's presence in the House of Commons, but assuredly it puts a new aspect upon even the most ordinary business. When he returned recently to the scene of so many of his triumphs,—and of not a few defeats—his followers were apparently overjoyed to see him ; and yet he had not been there four-and-twenty hours before a group of them disregarded his advice on a practical question of some importance, and divided the House two or three times against the course which he had recommended. It must necessarily be rather trying to be exposed to these indignities, especially when it is remembered that the fortunes of the Radical party are so largely dependent on Mr. Gladstone's personal efforts and influence. Without him the party has no hope of cohesion, and comparatively little prospect of success. But when he endeavours to lead them no inconsiderable section decline to follow, as in the memorable instance of the Royal Grants, when he exhorted them to follow him into one lobby and they defiantly and ostentatiously walked into the other. Mr. Gladstone would have received no such treatment as this from the party with which he was formerly associated. The Conservatives would have rendered him the tribute of a loyal support which is merely professed by the Radicals, and even these professions are made chiefly from platforms in the country. The Conservatives are seldom refractory when they are properly led. A man who deliberately or perversely opposes

his leader is frowned upon by the rest of his party, although he may happen to be at times entirely in the right. There may be occasional discontent, but it is kept entirely for private consumption. If Mr. Gladstone had done half as much for the Conservatives as he has done for the Liberals, he would now exercise an absolute supremacy. No mutinous spirits like those which hover on the flanks of the Liberal party would dare to cross his path. No Mr. Labouchere would be permitted to offer resistance to his counsels, or to sneer at his authority. And what a power he would have been for the last twenty years on the side of true and wise progress, combined with the careful preservations of the "bulwarks of the Constitution," now nearly submerged ! Not only his own history, but that of his country, would have been completely changed.

All this might, and most probably would, have happened if it had not been for the accident of Mr. Disraeli standing in the way. There was not room for these two proud spirits in the same party. Not the least strange part of the business is that at the critical time when Mr. Gladstone might have been secured, the Conservatives were anxious to get rid of Mr. Disraeli. In December, 1856, Lord Derby wrote to Lord Malmesbury : "As to Disraeli's unpopularity, I see it, and regret it ; and especially regret that he does not see more of the party in private." He made them feel that they could not do without him, but many a year had to pass before they went through the form of professing any attachment to him. Probably the Conservatives of the present day forget all these things, if they ever knew them ; but they cannot shut their eyes to the fact that

the Radicals are most fortunate in having a chief who possesses an immense hold upon the country, and whose presence in the House of Commons is, as I have said, worth half an army. The Conservatives have no such advantage. To the bulk of the rank and file of their party throughout the country, Lord Salisbury is a half mythical personage. Doubtless he lives, for speeches delivered by him occasionally make their appearance in the newspapers, and there are some people who have actually seen him. But to the "masses" he is a mere name, and not a name to conjure with. Who else is there? Mr. Balfour. Yes, but he has not yet undergone the test of a long trial, and already he begins to shrink up, like that awful *peau de chagrin* of Balzac's. Looking into the House any evening now, even from my point of view as a stranger, it is manifest that something or other has gone wrong. It may be hard at first, and to the outside observer, to discern precisely where the machinery has broken down, but what is perfectly obvious is that there is no smoothness in its working. It creaks and groans heavily, and sometimes it turns out a product altogether different from that which was desired or expected. Nobody seems to be able to control it. Any one who has been in a heavy storm at sea may have noticed that at times the screw is lifted completely out of the water, and that it then revolves with terrific velocity, but without helping the ship along one inch. The sailors call it a "racer." That is what the House of Commons is now, at least two or three times a week,—a "racer." After it has been pounding and throbbing away for many hours it is seen to be in exactly the same position as when it started. Of course, then, we must conclude that there has been obstruction in one or other of its Protean forms? Certainly not in the first weeks of the Session. There was some waste of time, but it cannot honestly be laid to the door of the Opposition. And as for the Conservatives,

they have not had a chance even to bleat. The early annexation of Private Members' nights showed them the uselessness of balloting for a chance of bringing in the motions in which they are interested, and they have consented to be utterly effaced. The Front Benchers have everything their own way. And that reminds me to mention that once or twice of late I have noticed an innovation on the part of Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Committees, which to my untutored mind appears to be eminently wise as well as conducive to the public interests. When a Private Member and a Front Bencher have risen together, Mr. Courtney has not always and as a matter of course called upon the Front Bencher. He has given the unofficial Member a chance. And why not? The Front Benchers fancy that the House and the country can never have enough of them, which I am convinced is a complete delusion. They think nothing of talking for a whole hour, simply because they have once held an office, in which the chances are that they by no means distinguished themselves. The tyranny of the Front Bench has already provoked the remonstrances of more than one able private Member, and some of these days there will be a formidable rising against it. Meanwhile, Mr. Courtney shows great good sense in occasionally ignoring these intrusive and troublesome personages. A Minister occupying an important position ought, of course, to take the *pas*, but the others should be allowed a fair chance with the Private Member, and nothing more.

This very difficult matter of calling upon one person to address the House when four or five have risen at the same time is settled in a great measure by the character a Member bears in the House, and this is a delicate point on which a mere observer is not in a position to form a trustworthy opinion. There is no one so pre-eminently fitted to deal with it as the present Speaker, Mr. Peel. He watches everybody



closely, he sees all that is going on, and he is never at fault in his estimate of men. He knows precisely how any individual Member is regarded on both sides of the House, he is strictly impartial, his judgment is absolutely unaffected by prejudices of any kind. Character is of inestimable value in any of the relations of life, but nowhere does it tell more immediately on a man's career than in the House of Commons. Members are brought closely into contact with one another in Committee work and at other times, and the prevailing opinion of the House with regard to any man is seldom wrong. It would be easy to name some men who are universally respected on both sides, although it may be that they seldom speak, and perhaps they are little known to the public. But the House is aware that they seldom fail to exercise good judgment, whether in speaking or in refraining from speech, and that their opinions are formed upon due reflection, and are not flung out wildly or without any sense of responsibility. On the other hand, there are Members, not a few, whose conceit or stupidity render them utterly oblivious to the temper and mood of the assembly which they are addressing, and who never have a moment's doubt that the whole world is waiting with bated breath to be made acquainted with their opinions. To suppress them entirely is impossible, for when everybody else has spoken they must be heard if they persist, although the House occasionally takes the law into its own hands and sternly puts them down. It is much to be regretted that it uses this power much less frequently than it did in former days. But the rusty weapon was brought out on the night of the debate on receiving the votes of the "three Members," to which I shall presently refer, and the effect was highly salutary. The person who invited the punishment, and who, it must frankly be said, often invites it, was Mr. Alpheus Cleophas Morton, Member for Peter-

borough. The debate had evidently closed, and the House had made up its mind for a division, when there rose in the background the dreaded figure of Mr. Morton. Not one word that he uttered could be heard. The House has put up with him very often, sorely against its grain, but that evening it would not submit to the infliction. After struggling for five minutes or so, Mr. Morton resumed his seat, and a judicious friend would strongly recommend him to remain quietly in it for some time to come.

But I was pointing out that something has gone wrong with the management of the House, and that is a very serious fact, especially at a time when the Ministerial forces have been much reduced by causes into which it would be unprofitable to enter here. Whose fault is it? There can be but one answer to the question. Mr. Balfour has not yet risen to the requirements of his new office. He cannot throw off the tendencies and the habits which he acquired as Irish Secretary. He is still too prone to unnecessary "flouts and jeers," a dangerous amusement in which poor Mr. Smith never indulged. He treats everything in an indolent, cynical, superficial manner, as if he took no real interest in what he happens to be doing. So it appears to an outsider like myself; but one who knows Mr. Balfour well assures me that in reality he is very anxious about his duties, and that his devil-may-care manner is a mere affectation. Well, then, what a pity it is that he takes the trouble to assume it, for it does not help him with his daily and nightly work, it cannot possibly remove a single difficulty from his path, and it discourages his own party while it gives strength and hope to the enemy. Surveyed from my corner in the gallery Mr. Balfour looks like a gentleman who is being profoundly bored, and who wants to go home to bed. If that, or anything like it, is really his state of mind, one cannot wonder at the unfortunate incidents

which have thus far marked his career as leader.

As Irish Secretary Mr. Balfour got into the way of making a good many speeches, and most of them were necessary. But that same habit sticks to him, and now the speeches are very seldom necessary, and are often exceedingly mischievous. He argues, he refines, he holds the House by the button-hole and lectures it, and worst of all, when the time for action arrives, he does not know how to make up his mind. The chief Ministerial Whip is sent for, and there is a consultation. Somebody else is sent for, and there is another long and whispered palaver. A colleague must be consulted, and he cannot be found. Meanwhile the debate is all drifting on anyhow and anywhere, time is being wasted, and the House feels itself without a leader. Mr. Balfour will even begin a speech in one vein and finish it in a totally different one. I must give an instance of which I was an eyewitness. Three Members of the House, as everybody knows, unwisely voted for a grant of the public money to the Mombasa Railway, they being directors of the East Africa Company, and therefore having, as was contended, a direct pecuniary and personal interest in the scheme. It is usual, when such votes are challenged, to submit to the House itself the question whether or not they shall be disallowed. That was the course taken on the present occasion. The hour for the division on this question was at hand, and Mr. Balfour rose to close the discussion. Had he candidly acknowledged that the three Members had made a mistake in voting, and asked the House to proceed no further, it is just possible that the matter would have dropped then and there. Or he might have taken another course and invited his party to support the three Members, on the ground that their interest in the railway was not of that direct and immediate kind which calls for special animadversion. But he did neither the one thing nor the other. He began his speech by

distinctly stating the Government, "as a Government," would take no part in the controversy, but would leave it entirely to the decision of the House. And then he proceeded to defend the votes of the three Members on grounds which were absolutely untenable, and which provoked murmurs from some of the most faithful of his followers behind him. Moreover, they provoked Mr. Gladstone into making a crushing rejoinder, which put Mr. Balfour into a corner, and left him there bound and helpless. Mr. Gladstone showed that the benefit to be derived by the grant for the railroad was limited strictly to the persons interested in the East Africa Company, and was in fact nothing more nor less than a proposal "To reimburse out of public funds an outlay for which these gentlemen themselves are personally responsible." Well, then, what happened? Mr. Balfour having announced that Members would be free to vote as they pleased, a considerable number of Conservatives took him at his word, and either walked out without voting, or went into the lobby for disallowing the disputed votes. The result was that Mr. Balfour and his colleagues found themselves in a minority, although just before the division it was known that the Government had a clear majority of over fifty in the House. Mr. Balfour is said to have felt this blow very keenly, but it was by his own act that it fell upon him. In the first place, he made a very injudicious speech; in the next, he was too timid or too much in doubt to say plainly to his party, "Follow me into the lobby." A party must be led. It is not safe to tell it to do as it likes, when you particularly want it to go in a given direction. *Il faut qu'une porte soit ouverte ou fermée.* Mr. Balfour has no decision, and the responsibilities of his new position appear to frighten him. He wavers, hesitates, looks round for something to turn up that will help him out of his difficulty, and all the time the House is slipping out of his hands.

No doubt he will improve upon all this, or "reform it altogether;" but it will never be possible to deny that the early part of his career as leader of the House was marked by some most unfortunate blunders,—blunders for which no one was prepared. And yet how often it happens in this world that a man who has done remarkably well in one position breaks down in a surprising manner when he is placed in another position for which a different set of qualities is required.

It followed from all this that business made little if any progress, and that it was found necessary to curtail the privileges of the unfortunate Private Member, who is always selected as the scapegoat for the faults of everybody else. Money had to be obtained, and it was not an easy thing to get, for it was required on a sort of peremptory summons, and the House of Commons is a bad place to go to in that spirit. It will not be driven, unless the driving apparatus is very skillfully concealed. The army, however, could not wait, neither could the navy, and after more or less difficulty some millions were obtained for both. Mr. Stanhope and Lord George Hamilton managed this part of the affair very adroitly, giving just such explanations as were asked for, and avoiding travelling into regions concerning which no enquiry was being made. It must seem strange to everybody who thinks about it that the defences of this country should be placed under the control of two civilians, who usually enter upon their offices in utter ignorance of everything they are called upon to administer. Such is the system adopted in this country, and Parliament has more than once shown an extreme jealousy of any interference with it. The Secretary for War and the First Lord of the Admiralty are, of course, advised by professional assistants; but as they have no knowledge of their own to start with, they are necessarily in the hands of persons who may have their own crotchets to carry out, and who are perhaps more

intent upon them than upon bringing the "fighting machine" to perfection. The Naval or War Minister is expected to defend his department in the House of Commons, and he generally contrives to do that with a fair measure of success. Under the gallery, on an important night, he takes care to have some of his most valuable subordinates, and if he finds himself getting out of his depth he can always place himself in communication with them, and secure ample material with which to dislodge and put to rout the outside critic. Mr. Stanhope is a model official in this respect. He has no hesitation, no misgivings. Towards the persons who have been attacking the administration of the army he assumes a tone of gentle pity, as of a man who is sorry for their ignorance and who would fain put them upon the right road if he could only get them there. Eighteen years' experience of Parliamentary life has grounded him thoroughly in the art of convincing the House of Commons, and of marshalling his statements so that no one shall be able to discover their weak points on the spur of the moment. He is now familiar with the routine of his office, and no doubt has acquired a great deal of valuable information about the army. Presently, therefore, in the ordinary course of events, he will have to retire and somebody will be put in his place who has to begin learning the business from the very beginning. Thus far in this Session Mr. Stanhope has had no more difficult task to encounter than that of replying to a long, rambling, and disjointed attack by Mr. Hanbury, who has the misfortune of mistaking loose gossip for facts, and who contrives to place himself at the mercy of any well-informed official. Mr. Stanhope is quite at home in dealing with a critic of this description, and it was really worth while to hear him make short work of Mr. Hanbury's long yarn. A professional soldier could not have done it half so well. We may not have so good an army as we ought to get for the money annually paid for

it, but it certainly has not deteriorated under Mr. Stanhope's rule.

Lord George Hamilton is not quite so deft an apologist, but he also has made himself master of most of the details of the work of his great department, and he knows how to reproduce his knowledge with considerable effect. His manner is not so confident as that of Mr. Stanhope; his flow of language is not so easy; he cannot assume so perfectly the air of an injured innocent. But it has to be borne in mind that he has to meet, not amateurs like Mr. Hanbury, but professional men who know what they are talking about. He therefore has to feel his way along with considerable caution. He has never made any grave mistake, and he takes good care not to say a word more than is strictly necessary for his purpose. Until a Minister has made himself master of that secret, he will always be in danger of meeting with some unexpected and severe mishap. The least said the soonest mended, runs the homely proverb, and never was more wisdom packed into fewer words. If Mr. Balfour had well digested it before the present Session opened, he would have spared himself and his party some mortifications and reverses.

The other evening I was invited to dinner in the room which is set apart for members and their friends, and I noticed that the talk all round me did not turn upon what was going on in the House, but upon the probable time when Parliament would be dissolved. The sands are running low in the glass, and many of the present Members know perfectly well that they are destined to return no more to this

Temple of the Muses. I failed to see any signs of that exuberance of spirits which the prospect of a general election is supposed to excite. There were well known Gladstonians near me, but they seemed by no means anxious to hurry forward the great trial of strength. Only those were happy who have made up their minds to retire voluntarily from the scene of so much hard and thankless work. People who have anything to gain by being Members of Parliament want to stay; those who have nothing to gain get tired of it all much sooner than they used to do. Some Members are so overwhelmed with the work of replying to letters that half the day is gone before they have finished with that part of their labours, and they may count themselves lucky if their cheque-book has not played an important part in the correspondence. Others are hunted down by cadgers, loafers, and humbugs of all kinds. Yet some of these persons may possibly be useful at election time, and it does not do to run the risk of offending anybody. The Metropolitan Members are the worst off in this respect, because their constituents live close by, and can drop in, as it were, at any moment. A wise man will take care, if he possibly can, to place two or three hundred miles between himself and his dear friends whose votes make him a Member of Parliament. So much have I learnt from my occasional visits to the lobby and the dining-room, and I gladly give the benefit of my observations to all intending candidates, whatever their politics may happen to be.

END OF VOL. LXV.

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